

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT H.E.L.P.?

. . . a "livewire" organization of women, married and single, young and older, devoting their time and talents to make Terre Haute and Vigo County a better place in which to live.

H.E.L.P., a non-profit, non-partisan organization, means "Housewives Effort for Local Progress." It was organized in 1961 on the premise that women must assume their share of responsibility for community progress.

We hope you enjoy reading about HELP on the inside pages. If HELP sounds like the kind of organization of which you would like to be a part, we hope you will call us at 232-7533 or pay us a visit at the HELP Office, 300½ South 5th Street (second floor Senior Citizens Center.)

KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY !

JOIN H.E.L.P.

Help (T.H.)
REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE
Have
Vigo County Public Library
You
Heard
About

HELP?

**HOUSEWIVES
EFFORT FOR
LOCAL
PROGRESS**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT H.E.L.P.

** IS HELP A "POLITICAL" ORGANIZATION?

HELP was organized as a non-partisan group. It strives to remain non-partisan, working with the elected and appointed officials who are in office, in those areas of concern which are best for the community as a whole, regardless of politics.

** HOW MANY HELP MEMBERS ARE THERE?

Between 400 and 500. Some members prefer to be inactive and support HELP's work only with payment of dues and contributions; many members take active roles in committee work.

** HOW DOES HELP OPERATE?

Its affairs are administered by a board of directors elected annually by the membership. Officers are elected from the board of directors and committees include both directors and HELP members.

** IN WHAT AREAS OF CONCERN DOES HELP WORK?

Elimination of open dumps, elimination or improvement of dilapidated and/or condemned housing, elimination or control of air and water pollution, improved garbage-ash-trash pick-up, improved traffic control, street improvement, improved park facilities, enforcement of gambling laws, full-time recreation director, new high schools, unified health department, sanitary land-fill, area planning, urban renewal, library

staff and housing, county park board, state-wide meat inspection, United Fund, poll watching, water sprinkling allowance, sewer construction, mosquito control, rat control, small animal control, and dead animal disposition.

** WHAT ARE SOME OF HELP'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS?

- took initiative toward getting a single-unit board of health mandated for Vigo County which is new in operation with a full-time director.
- took initiative on getting public officials and private citizens to tear down or improve long-condemned eyesore properties.
- took initiative in getting state legislature to pass a state-wide meat inspection program.
- publicly endorsed sprinkling allowance, Urban Renewal #2, area planning, open housing, construction of new high schools, fluoridation, "right to know" policy at City Council meetings.
- cooperated with other civic groups to get Cumulative School Building Fund established in Vigo County.
- instrumental in passage of county ordinance creating county park board in Vigo County to improve and extend county recreational facilities.
- encouraged installation of dead animal incinerator at Sewage Disposal site.
- encouraged establishment of branch library at Plaza North Shopping Center.
- sponsored public meetings about recreation, state legislation passed, candidates' views, master plan, sewer problems, rabies control, traffic planning, and single-unit health

department.

- emphasized need for more public participation on issues thru the news media and civic organizations.

(In February 1967 HELP received the Good Government Award from the Terre Haute Jaycees. This was the first time this award was presented to an organization, rather than to an individual. It also marked the first time women were award recipients.

** HOW DOES HELP TELL THE COMMUNITY ABOUT WHAT IT IS DOING?

Thru the local news media and primarily thru its monthly newsletter "HELP Reports". Started in October 1962, it is published monthly September thru May at a cost of \$2.00 to the subscriber for the nine issues. It carries news and information which usually cannot be read elsewhere.

** HOW CAN I BECOME A MEMBER OF HELP?

By payment of \$1.00 in dues. An additional \$2.00 gives you a 1-year subscription (9 issues) to the HELP Newsletter.

HELP Office: 300½ South 5th Street

Telephone: 232-7533

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursdays - 10-12 Noon.

Vigo County Public Library
REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

HELP

300½ S. 5th St.
Terre Haute, Indiana
232-7533

**HOUSEWIVES
EFFORT FOR
LOCAL
PROGRESS**

May 23, 1975

Dear HELPers,

At the annual meeting of H.E.L.P., Inc., held at 11:00 a.m. on May 15th, at the Washington Avenue Presbyterian Church, the members present unanimously approved the following resolution:

Be it hereby Resolved that:

As the League of Women Voters, during calendar year 1974, extended local action authority to all its committees, and as during calendar year 1975 the League of Women Voters is organizing its first committee to study local health needs, and further as Vigo County Co-Ordinating Council and Women's Political Caucus have become effective influences in community affairs, it is the considered conclusion of the voting members in H.E.L.P., Inc., that this corporation be dissolved in order to avoid duplication of effort between H.E.L.P. and the above mentioned organizations whose purposes and interests are, for the most part undistinguishable. Indeed, those H.E.L.P.ers who wish to may unite with some other group and attain a more complete realization of one of the original purposes of H.E.L.P.: "providing a means for all to work together for the common good."

In order that this resolution may be carried out be it further resolved that: the current Board of Directors continue to serve in the capacity of a dissolution committee to insure that all legal requirements are met.

HELP

300½ S. 5th St.
Terre Haute, Indiana
232-7533

HOUSEWIVES EFFORT FOR LOCAL PROGRESS

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This step is taken with regret, but also with pride in H.E.L.P.'s accomplishments of the past fourteen years and in the number of "H.E.L.P.-trained" women serving in civic activities throughout the community.

The League of Women Voters has extended an invitation to all H.E.L.P. members to join the League and work in the area of their choice. Jane Wood invites you all to a coffee at her home at 7160 Williamsburg Lane in Colonial Park at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 29th, where you can learn more about the League and its committees. Call Jane at 299-2034 if you need directions.

We thank you for your faithful support, knowing that you will continue to aid other organizations and citizens as they work "for the common good." If you have any questions, please feel free to call any of the active board members as listed in the January newsletter.

Sincerely yours,

H.E.L.P. Board of Directors



300½ S. 5th St.
Terre Haute, Indiana

HOUSEWIVES
EFFORT FOR
LOCAL
PROGRESS

May 2, 1975

Dear HELPers,

The annual meeting of H.E.L.P., Inc. will be held at 11:00 a.m. Thursday, May 15, at Washington Avenue Presbyterian Church, 6th and Washington.

The past year's activities will be reported, and a decision about continuing the organization will be made.

A buffet luncheon will be served at 12:30. After the meal, Dr. Ann Bass will present her report on the physical facilities survey of elementary schools in Vigo County, which is being conducted by the school board. Dr. Bass, Professor of Educational Psychology at ISU, was our representative on the committee and will be happy to answer questions about it.

Cost of the luncheon will be \$2.00. Reservations can be made with Marilym Williams, 235-9946 or Rosemary Duwelius, 235-0423.

If you can attend the entire session, good. If not, you are welcome to come for part of it. We hope to see many of you there.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Duwelius
Annual Meeting Committee

HELP Reports

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

October 30, 1973

This issue of the H.E.L.P. Newsletter includes news from the continuing problems with Terre Haute's sanitary landfills, the operation of sewage disposal plant, a report on the status of the new library building project, good news concerning local parks, and hope for parents of children with learning problems.

SANITATION AND HEALTH:

Appointments to Boards:

Air Pollution Control: HELP has verbal assurance that mistakes made in appointments of qualified people to the Air Pollution Control Board will be rectified in the near future. The Air Quality County Ordinance of Terre Haute states that the Mayor shall appoint a physician; that ordinance further states one Board Member shall be an attorney.

A woman appointed to the V.C. Board of Health? Hopefully, yes. Since consolidation of two Health Units in Vigo County, the organizational structure of the city-county, as prescribed in Burn's statutes, has been followed. Under that structure we have always had one woman on our Board of Health and one veterinarian with two physicians among others. In January of 1973 Mrs. Ellis's term expired and she was replaced by Forrest Sherer. Since then HELP understands that Vigo County will no longer follow the city-county structure. In the future we will follow the organizational structure of a county health organization. The law says, under the county structure, the only requirements are that two board members must be physicians. There is nothing illegal here, but the State Board of Health recommends that a woman be appointed to the Board. HELP hopes that these errors and/or oversights will soon be rectified.

DID YOU KNOW?

That all four Vigo county landfills are now approved by State Board of Health?

--That Dr. Goodman, Health Officer, has requested and received another extension of the State anti-rabies Quarantine?

--That all Vigo County dead animals are being deposited in Victory Mine landfill? Conservative estimates are at least 1,000 pounds per month.

--That the animal incinerator, purchased and installed by the Board of Public Works, 1965-66, has not been used for its intended purpose for several years and now is reported to be among the missing parts at the Sewage Disposal Plant?

--That from the Vigo County tax dollar, less than one cent per capita is being spent for each child at Glenn Home? This amounts to \$7.43 per child, per day, and includes all expense from medical care to haircuts. HELP attends meetings of Vigo County Coordinating Council's Welfare Committee which is concentrating on the Glenn Home and the Foster Care Program.

STATEMENT AT SEPTEMBER, 1973, CITY COUNCIL MEETING MADE BY HELP PRESIDENT SUSAN WARD:

On July 5, 1972, HELP presented the city council with some important questions pertaining to the cost of our ash trash removal contract with Gibson Co. Our questions were turned over to a committee headed by Kenneth Thomas. We had requested that these be answered by next council meeting and as best we know there has been no response to our questions.

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Terre Haute's present contract is now half over and it certainly seems none too early to start a thorough check of the city's extremely expensive contract. WE hope you will answer those questions that are still applicable next month at the council meeting.

HELP does not have legal background, but we think, by logical deduction, that the people in the municipality are being charged twice for the same service. In our "Specifications for Waste and Refuse Collection and Removal" there is a section entitled "Disposal of Collected Residential Waste and Refuse" which reads; "the contractor shall be required to dispose of the collected waste and refuse in a manner that will comply with the laws of the State of Indiana, and the city of Terre Haute." Because the specifications mention this it seems to us that the city council has brought itself into the "landfill business" and the money we pay our contractor includes this part of the service. The people in the municipality, therefore, by deduction, pay for disposal within this contract. We then pay again through the county for landfill use. With a city population of 7-,286 we pay 4.5- per capita per year and with the county population of 114,528 we pay 3.50 per capita per year. Are we in the city paying twice for the same service????????????????????

HELP has information from other communities that we feel would be helpful to the city council and we would be most happy to share this with any interested members. Please feel free to contract us. Thank you

WHO HAS THE AUTHORITY to close state-approved landfills?

With the 'agreement' in mind between county commissioners and contractor to close three landfills in Vigo County on September 13, 1973, HELP asked state officials the above question. In the opinion of Sanitary Engineering Division, State Board of Health, approved sanitary landfills are generally closed by health officials for health reasons. It was on this assumption that HELP opposed the sudden closing of the three landfills. Within a few hours, Dr. Goodman changed his mind from "I cannot act until a health hazard does occur" to "I am asking the health department attorney to prepare some injunctive court procedure in our effort to get the landfills reopened as soon as possible." (Refuse Disposal Act, Sec. 25.26)

Request for injunctive action was filed, and the hearing on that request was reported in Terre Haute newspapers to be a three-hour affair in Superior Court #2, Sept. 18, 1973, 2 p.m. One HELPer who was present gives her account of the 'happening' as follows:

Judge McCrory heard Attorney William Maher, representing the Vigo County Board of Health, state his request. Attorney Fredrick Bauer, representing County Commissioners was present along with Ben Cox, council for the contractor. Witness called were Dr. Goodman, Paul Welch, sanitarian, Harry Brentlinger, commissioner, and Max Gibson, contractor.

At about 2:45 p.m. Judge McCrory invited attorneys to meet with him in his chambers. Spectators waited in the courtroom until 5 p.m. at least when the HELPer left, knowing nothing about what kind of 'agreements' might be worked out in such a long recess.

Sept. 19, 1973, landfills reported open for business.

Sept. 28, 1973, county commissioners awarded bids amounting to \$114,580.94 for service of three landfills until Jan. 1, 1974, only.

The landfill south of Fowler Park is costing \$82,860 this year.

All four landfill contracts will be advertised for public bid on December 3, 1973. Bids will be opened December 28, 1973.

The 1974 budget proposed \$406,860 for landfill maintenance in 1974.

HELP is advised that the injunctive action was withdrawn with the reopening of landfills and letting of new contracts.

President of HELP Susan Ward recently appeared before the Vigo County Board of Health with a statement congratulating the Board for the appointment of Forrest Sherer and Irving Yonks as new members and urging Board members to attend meetings regularly and to obtain explanations when their suggestions and recommendations are not followed. She summarized HELP's main areas of concern regarding public health as follows:

1. Continuing interest in obtaining conformity to public health laws of our sanitary landfills.
2. A solution to the problem of litter and misplaced refuse that lines every county road, especially near landfill sites.
3. Dilapidated housing.
4. State licensing of all Terre Haute Day Care centers.
5. Efficient sewage disposal plant operation.
6. Subdivision regulation enactment.
7. Animal control.
8. Identification of the kinds of materials and their sources that are dumped into our landfills.

Other action taken by HELP's Sanitation and Health Committee include:

-- A visit with Dr. Goodman following Mrs. Ward's statement to the County Health

Board for the purpose of offering our cooperation in implementing solutions to community health problems. Dr. Goodman offered no cooperation in assisting HELP to find solutions. However, he did suggest that HELPers should run for Public office in the future and solve these problems themselves. (Dr. Goodman is appointed by the Vigo County Board of Health. The Board of Health in turn is appointed by elected officials.) Food for thought: All suggestions made to authority for their jurisdiction granted as we understand by the public health law.

DATES to remember:

Next Air Pollution Control meeting: Dec. 5, 1973, 1:30 p.m. Court House Annex.

Next Board of Health meeting: Oct. 24, 1973, 8 p.m. Court House Annex.

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PARKS AND RECREATION:

Congratulations are in order for the Vigo County Park and Recreation Department for again sponsoring Pioneer Days at Fowler Park on October 6th and 7th. With the "Irishman's Covered Bridge" and the historical log cabin amidst the large trees with their magnificent coloring, Fowler Park provides a perfect backdrop for the pioneer activities. This annual event provides "children of all ages" the opportunity to view and take part in corn shuck-ing, shelling corn, shooting marbles, games, square dancing, churning butter, making ice cream, spinning, quilting, watching a blacksmith at work and riding in a covered wagon.

Roads are cut and the swimming area is under construction at Prairie Creek Park (Vigo County's latest).

Hunt's Nature Area is very busy with tours.

Flesher Memorial Woods and Deutsch Nature Area will be available for tours after October 15.

The Glenn Recreation Center with Don Durkin as director is ready for another winter seaseon. The interior was painted and repaired during the summer. A survey is presently underway to find the recreational wishes and needs of the people in the area.

Many months ago, there was an announcement of plans to renovate the Terminal Arcade as a home for the Early Wheels Museum. We are "wistfully watching" for action in this direction.

FROM THE PARKS DEPARTMENT:

1. The Cul de sac at Gilbert Park has been almost finished.
2. A successs recreation program was carried out this summer by the Park Deot that inkluded good community participation.
3. HELP bought up the need for work to improve Fairbanks Park on the river before the Wabash Festival next year. Pat Daugherty states in early winter they will begin to improve and renovate the site.
4. The property in Terre Town that the Park Dept had hoped to acquire for a park for that area had been sold. The Park Dept is still pursuing the possiability of obtaining it from the present owner.
5. The architecture contract for the new golf course has been signed. HELP has been interested in the development of other recreational facilities on this property we have been assured that after the golf is completed, additional recreational facilities will be added as money permits. Master plan will include these future facilities .
6. Torner House for girls is the responsibility of the Park Board. This house rewiringbut the Park Dept. has no funds available at the present time.
7. The original landscaping for Hyte Community Center was the responsibility of the Park Dept. and this work is almost completed. Maintenance of the exterior of Hyte Community Center is also done by the Park Dept.

How much longer does Parkview Subdivision nome to put up with stagnant water and dead fish in their yards!!!!

Pat Dougherty said his men would fix the leak in the pond at Deming Park when the city engineer tells him how to do the job. It would be nice if the Board of Health helped do something about it, it too. They have looked at it but to our knowledge that is all they have done ---and that won't take away dead fish.

LIBRARY BOARD NEWS

:
The site for the new library (Old Vigo County School Corporation Administration Building) was vacated and the keys turned over to Dennis Trucking Company on Sept.25,1973. Actual demolition has not begun but Mr. Ed Howard was asked to call to see when they would begin.

BUILDING PROGRAM REPORT:

Mr. Howard recommened that the Board hire a Library Building Consultant to help with the program and also with funding. The cost of these services should not exceed \$1,000. the person appointed is Ralph Van Handle, Gary, Indiana. Howards said that having a consultant was necessary in order to apply for federal funds. Mr. Sutherland moved (and the motion was passed) that the Board and Administration get a citizens savisory committee to work with them on the building program. Perhaps this will start the wheels rolling.

EDUCATION:

HELP's Education Committee is considering several areas of study. Among them are book rental fees, an Affirmative Action Officer for V.C.S.C., and the current English and social studies programs in the Jr. high schools. The committee welcome new members and ideas for study.

CHILDREN WITH LEARNING PROBLEMS:

A group of local parents and educators are trying to organize a chapter of Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, Inc., here in Terre Haute. You may have seen their posters displayed in local shopping centers. HELP appaulds this effort at getting an organization going which might help these particular children with specialized learning problems. Who are these children, and how could they be recognized? They compose 2 to 3% of the school population. Do you know a child who is:

*failing in reading, spelling, writing or arithmetic--but teacher he could do the work "if he'd only try"?

*poor in coordination? disoriented in space?

*easily distracted, impulsive, or over-activite?

*confused in his language or speech-- or fails to understand what you tell him?

*often anxious or angry, because he cannot cope with the requirment of school, of of social situations?

*usually forgetful, habitually inattentive?

Is your child -- or a child you know --"often", "sometimes ", "usually", or "habitually" any combination of these?

These are the children with special learning disabilities on whose behalf the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities was established.

All authorities agree, however, that these whose conditions have been referred to as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, decelopmental phasia, etc., will be increasing problem unless:

1. Their handicap is discovered early;

2. their problems and difficulties are diagnosed correctly; and

3. they are given the special educational psychological, medical and social services they need.

It is to advance this program that the organizations affiliated with the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities were reated.

For additional information, contact Wanda Councnman, Visiting Nurses Ass'n. or Ann Bass at 234-5045.

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NEW MANAGER AT SEWAGE DISPOSAL OFFICE: Mr. J. E. Bilyeou has taken over the duties of Miss Helen Corey who has resigned. Mr. Bilyeou has recently retired from the Indiana Air National Guard. He is a native Terre Hautean.

Mr. Dave Arnold is the new plant manager of the Sewage Treatment Plant. He is well qualified. It is hoped that the large increase in salary for this position will prove to be worthwhile.

WILL YOU BE ELIGIBLE FOR A LAWN SPRINKLING ALLOWANCE IN THE SUMMER OF 1974?

Deadline for making application--December 1, 1973.

In the fall of 1974 the user will be entitled to a sprinkling allowance based on the consumption of water used at a given property, during 1973.

A user may apply in person at the Sewage Disposal Office, 3rd floor City Hall, 9AM - 4PM. Mon. thru Friday.

or

Write in -- giving full name and correct address of property owner.

Suggest calling office to check that information has been recorded.

In the event applicant owns more than one piece of property each property should be listed on a separate sheet.

Question: What is the basis for rates charged for sewage disposal?

Answer: Rates are based on water consumption (number of cu. feet used)-- not the rates charged by the Water Company.--In other words, if the Water Company increased their rates it would have nothin whatsoever to do with the disposal rates.

* * * * *

KUDOS TO:

--The Terre Haute Symphony for being off to another good year -- and especially for featuring our own Balerie Saalbach and Kathie Montgomery.

--The Citizens for Better Government for getting into the act quickly and protesting the landfill suit settlement.

--T.H.R.O.W. (Terre Haute Re-cycling of Waste) for continuing to overcome obstacles and accomplishing significant and permanent ecological benefits.

--I.S.U. for two splended series, The Crisis of Values in the Modern City and Film on Women, open to the public either free or on a nominal basis.

--The YWCA for initiating night classes so that children of working mothers may more fully avail themselves of opportunities to develop skills.

The Banks of the Wabash Council for planning something to reflect positively on our local image.

-- Any number of local P.T.A. and P.T.O.'s where fall festivals and other fund raising activities are going on , in order to supplement what local schools can so for-- and with-- our children.

-- Various citizen groups which are insisting that ordinary parents and taxpayers have a way -- and should be heard-- in school decisions.

--All those who had a part in making the junction between Terre Haute and West Terre Haute safer and more attractive.

-- Local Vico County School Corporation officials for bringing someone of the stature of Dr.Ames into our midst for their opening of school program.

-- Planned Parenthood for its constantly innovative approach.

-- All those who contributed to Hyte Center so that it could be built, and who continue to support its excellent program.

-- The many who spoke out against the seemingly ill- considered and political ouster attempt of Kirby Smith.

-- Those responsible for the satellite lunch program, which seems to the working well in our schools.

-- Both local hospitals for the excellent emergency room treatment which is now available.

-- The volunteers who are assisting with current financial solicitations for leukemia, M.D.arthritis, and other diseases.

--Those local super markets which have installed dual cash registers so that housewives don't have to separate taxable from non-taxable items. A small thing, but it helps!

--Branch libraries such as the one in Southland which had a well-developed and highly advertised recreational program for children during the summer months.

--The fire departments for the excellent ambulance service provided in several emergencies HELP has heard of.

--Local churches which provide nursery school programs for disadvantaged children. Washington Avenue Presbyterian Church led the way in this fine work. While it is difficult to assess the long-range result, HELP applauds such investment of time, money, and love in children.
--Charlotte Caldwell for attending the Sept. 30 meeting called by CATCAP to discuss racial problems in our schools.
--Paul Welch for being installed as President of the Indiana Association of Sanitarians.

* * * * *

WE SHED A FEW TEARS BECAUSE --

HELP Regret:

... Problems arose which led to the early demise of the Ralph Johnston Youth Center or at least a severe redefinition of its purpose. HELP sent a representative to its dedication less than a year ago, and remembers Bough and others who spoke of this as being a model program which would receive national attention. What a pity it didn't develop to its fullest potential.

... Indiana is one of the three states with a book rental charge. The 11.35 per pupil in the elementary grades hits disproportionately hard at poorer, large families.

... the cost of milk has gone up from 4¢ to nearly a dime, which discourages many families from providing this nutritious snack for their children at school.

... of the vandalism in connection with the local telephone strike. Such wanton destruction of property with concomitant inconvenience to many who need telephone service seems rather inappropriate.

... the garbage that got scattered all up and down highways leading to closed sanitary landfills for several weeks.

... there seems little evidence that industrial pollution is any better than when HELP began to scream about the problem years ago.

... we don't have a separate library board yet! HELP had congratulatory statement ready to read to the school board when they relinquished their library duties, but no! How long oh Lord, how long? We are one of the only two library boards in the state that are listed as class two boards.

... Bikeways never got off the ground. What are we waiting for? How big a tragedy?

..... Brighton's pre-occupation with prostitution. HELP certainly not campaigning for prostitution, but must question its assessment as our most serious problem.

... Catcap feels that the police department has racist attitudes and policies. "Time is running out".

... the request for a multi-ethnic study program in our school system never received a reply or so those who made the request say.

HELP WANTS TO KNOW--

What provision is being made for students who need out of class help under the new system whereby textbook stay in certain junior high classrooms. Just parental intervention? Doesn't that discriminate against children whose parents hesitate to make a fuss?

Are school buses dangerously overcrowded?

Could we have a vest pocket park at the corner at third and Ohio where the gas station now is? It would certainly add to the already started beautification program of our government buildings.

Why has the slide been lying on its side at Voorhees Park for the past three months?

Who is responsible for the demolition of the old Garfield School? It is a real eyesore in this community.

Public Library
222 North 7th St.
Terre Haute, Ind. 47807

H. E. L. P.
300 1/2 S. 6th St.
TERRE HAUTE, IND. 47801



HELP REPORTS

An Open Letter to the Editor

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Dear Editor,

H.E.L.P. warmly commends the Vigo County Health Department for their announced intention to clean up health hazards in the county in order to provide all citizens with a better environment.

Rat-infested alleys and properties were a major complaint when H.E.L.P. was first organized. In April, 1963, HELP REPORTS asked the question: "Why does the city spend several thousand dollars each summer spraying the city for flies and mosquitoes yet permit householders to maintain breeding places for flies and mosquitoes in ash pits, open receptacles for garbage and trash, even dumping on the ground?" Since many of these conditions still exist, in spite of new regulations, H.E.L.P. is glad that the Health Department is now planning to clean them up.

H.E.L.P. offers to meet with the Health Officer to develop possible ways in which we can assist in promoting public acceptance of this program to eliminate health hazards and eyesores from our environment.

H.E.L.P. Board of Directors
March 5, 1975

The above letter was released to the news media on the date given. Such a program can be of major benefit to our community if each of us will cooperate by cleaning up our own property and urging friends and neighbors to do the same. Watch for announcements as to when the trucks will be picking up in your neighborhood.

H.E.L.P. will meet with Dr. Schumaker, the Health Officer, on March 17 to offer any possible assistance to the program.

HELPERS COVER PUBLIC MEETINGS

H.E.L.P. attended the quarterly meeting of the Vigo County Board of Health on January 23. We had been informed that the agenda would include a discussion of the department's policy in regard to releasing items to the media, and keeping the public informed concerning the activities of the department. H.E.L.P. has been critical of the closed policy adopted by the department in recent years. The item was not on the agenda, but H.E.L.P. raised the question from the floor. In the discussion that followed, it appeared that the board itself was not aware of the closed policy and did not favor it. H.E.L.P. has been informed that a monthly statistical report will be released to the news media. This is good news for the citizens of Vigo County.

H.E.L.P. attended the County Council meeting on January 21, and supported the Health Board's request for a full-time Health Officer. The request was denied by the council.

H.E.L.P. was present at the hearing held in the city court room by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners on February 25 where owners of some thirty parcels of land declared themselves dissatisfied with compensation awarded them for confiscation of their properties. The majority of these cases were settled in private sessions following the hearing; but, according to the Terre Haute Tribune of March 8, eight suits were filed against the city and the Sanitary District. The newspaper names seven of the plaintiffs. Work on the Thompson Ditch Project cannot begin until these suits are settled.

Helpers also cover the County Park Board meetings, the Air Pollution Board meetings, and other public meetings as needed.

PLAN NOW TO USE YOUR COUNTY AND CITY PARKS THIS SPRING AND SUMMERTHE NEW CIVIC CENTER IS GREAT -- BUT

Saturday's regional basketball tourney pointed out the need for more parking for Hulman Center. While there were metered spaces vacant, many people were reluctant to park in them for fear of getting a parking ticket--others took the chance.

Perhaps the city administration should have made a public announcement lifting the restrictions in the environs of the amphitheater for Saturday. A bag over the meter with a sign, "Free parking for the regional --courtesy, the City of Terre Haute," also would have been effective. A crowd of this size is just what the doctor ordered for a sagging downtown economy. Stores and restaurants would derive great benefits from crowds at the amphitheater if a really large parking lot, at a nominal fee, were to be located between the center and downtown.

THROW is continuing its efforts to get a new recycling center ready to open. At the present time, it looks as if collections will be limited to glass and aluminum, since the bottom has dropped out of the paper market.

SURVEY OF PHYSICAL FACILITIES OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Dr. Ann Bass has consented to serve as H.E.L.P.'s representative on the Citizen's Committee which will carry out the elementary school physical facilities survey as an aid to future planning. Ann is well qualified for this, not only professionally, but as the mother of elementary-aged children. The committee membership was approved by the School Board on January 20, and an organizational meeting will be held March 14.

LOCAL MAN ON STATE HEALTH FACILITIES COUNCIL

Vigo County is indeed fortunate to have James F. Conover as one of the two "public members" of the 18 individuals making up the Health Facilities Council which passes judgment on the licensing of nursing homes in Indiana. He is also a member of the Indiana Commission for Aging. We would hope that having a local man in these positions will tend to keep area nursing homes on their toes in providing the best possible care for their patients.

ABOUT SCHOOLS

Isn't it time that organized sports for girls in high school begins to receive more attention, more personnel help, more money?

Now is the time for citizens to do some long, hard thinking about alternatives to keeping in school young people who don't want to be there, who are not learning, and who prevent other students from learning by their disruptive behavior.

H.E.L.P. encourages the corporation to begin counselling more students into taking typing, foreign languages, and the sciences. (Students complain that it's difficult to get into typing classes for more than one semester--with perhaps an additional term in summer school.) Surely space could be found for more typewriters and teachers. Typing for 9th graders also could be a real asset in improving the junior high curriculum. Typing is a necessary skill to many jobs--numerous students have added to their income by holding down part-time jobs, involving typing, while attending college. The student also saves time and money in preparing term papers. Area business would welcome improved typing skills in employees.

(continued on page 3)

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While the sciences and foreign languages are not always necessary for college admission, they often are required; and in many cases the student finds, starting his college career, that he is lacking in skills needed to proceed with his course of study.

A comparative chart showing the number of students enrolled in classes that were hurting for lab space in the old schools might be interesting. How many more students are now taking chemistry, physics, art, manual arts, business skills, etc., than were enrolled in such classes in the old high schools?

KNOW YOUR HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Vigo County Communicable Disease Clinic, located at the back of the ground floor of the County Courthouse Annex, 120 S. 7th St., is a busy part of the Vigo County Health Department.

Originally the VD Clinic, with a doctor and nurse available to treat patients without charge, the clinic has been expanded by means of a federal grant of \$34,000 renewable yearly, to include the Gonorrhea Screening and Control Program.

This program, for males and females, depends upon voluntary cooperation by area physicians. The clinic office furnishes media for testing to the doctors and picks up cultures for testing. Paul Welch, administrative assistant, says that the response of physicians in Vigo, Clay, Parke, and Vermillion Counties is good. The program is co-ordinated by Marian Husain, epidemiologist. George Craig is the lab technician and Mary Dinkel keeps the records. These three people work half-time; their salaries are paid by the federal grant as are lab supplies.

Also paid by the grant is Betty Johnson, R.N., who is the VD public health nurse and assists in the control program.

Salaries for Ralph Garrett, clinic investigator, trained by the public health office, and Dr. Shumaker, who is the clinic doctor in addition to being part-time health officer, are paid from county funds. This salary, \$6,800, is over and above Dr. Shumaker's salary as part-time health officer.

In an interview Mrs. Johnson stressed that the venereal disease clinic services are free to patients and are completely confidential. State law does not require notification of parents when minors are treated. According to Mr. Welch, Vigo County's free clinic is one of very few in Indiana. With the increase in the number of cases of VD, this clinic provides an important service to the county.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Call Marilyn Williams, 235-9946, or Marie Fox, 894-2453.

WORST ROAD IN THE COUNTY?

A citizen has suggested that the Worst Road in the County Award go to Canal Road between Davis and Margaret and Davis from Housemann to 7th. Motorists here are forced to play "chicken" daily as they zig-zag around the chuckholes on either side of the road. The intersection of Canal and Davis has no lighting, and it is very hard at night to see to make a left turn off Davis onto Canal. A foot or two of weeds is all that separates the road from the old canal bed. Reflective guardrails here might well prevent a tragedy. This route is heavily travelled by South High students and by school buses. We waited too long for sidewalks to the high schools.

Have you a nomination for "Worst Road in the County" or "Worst Street in the City"? If so, send it to H.E.L.P. newsletter editor, 300½ S. 5th St., Terre Haute, or call 235-1423.

WHERE THE ACTION IS -- MORE OR LESS

Mar. 17, Mon. Library Board 8:00 p.m. Hospitality Room,
Meadows Shopping Center
Mar. 24, Mon. School Board 8:00 p.m. Administration Building,
961 Lafayette
Mar. 24, Mon. County Park Board 4:00 p.m. Red Cross Building,
700 S. 3rd St.
Apr. 1, Tues. H.E.L.P. Board of Directors 9:30 a.m. Home of
Marie Fox, Riley
Apr. 14, Mon. School Board
Apr. 21, Mon. Library Board 8:00 p.m. Emeline Fairbanks,
222 N. 7th St.
Apr. 23, Wed. Board of Health 8:00 p.m. Courthouse Annex,
120 S. 7th St.
Apr. 28, Mon. School Board
Apr. 28, Mon. County Park Board
May 6, Tues. H.E.L.P. Board of Directors
May 12, Mon. School Board

Frances Boyd
112 Berkeley Drive
Terre Haute, Indiana 47803

TERRE HAUTE, IND. 47801
300% S. 5th ST.



S A V E F O R R E F E R E N C E

Prepared by Housewives Effort for Local Progress, (H.E.L.P.)
Listing four (4) Lease Agreements, County landfill cost,
Lease Agreements filed in Vigo County Commissioners Offices,
and, Municipal, Terre Haute--Refuse Collection and Removal
Contract--filed in City Controller's office.

(There are no central collection contracts outside the city.)

Purpose of Lease Agreements...to provide four (4) Sanitary Landfills
in Vigo County. Filed in Vigo County Commissioners Office.

- 1) Lease Agreement filed July 1, 1974.....Novins Township
Lessee, Vigo County Commissioners. Lessor, Victory Disposal Corp.
Max Gibson, president
Monthly Rate: Yearly Rate: 5-Year, agreed period,
\$ 6,905 \$ 82,860 \$414,300.

If option to purchase is exercised during or after 5-year period,
Suggested selling price:
\$ 97,300.

- 2) Lease Agreement filed July 1, 1974.....Lost Creek Township
Lessee, Vigo County Commissioners. Lessor, Victory Disposal Corp.
Max Gibson, president
Monthly Rate: Yearly Rate: 5-Year, agreed period,
\$13,220 \$158,640 \$793,200

If option to purchase is exercised during or after 5-year period,
Suggested selling price:
\$175,140

- 3) Lease Agreement filed July 1, 1974.....Linton Township
Lessee, Vigo County Commissioners. Lessor, Victory Disposal Corp.
Max Gibson, president
Monthly Rate: Yearly Rate: 5-Year, agreed period,
\$ 6,905 \$ 82,860 \$414,300

If option to purchase is exercised during or after 5-year period,
Suggested selling price:
\$ 93,660

- 4) Lease Agreement filed July 1, 1974.....Sugar Creek Township
Lessee, Vigo County Commissioners. Lessor, Victory Disposal Corp.
Max Gibson, president
Monthly Rate: Yearly Rate: 5-Year, agreed period,
\$ 2,088 \$ 25,056 \$125,280

If option to purchase is exercised during or after 5-year period,
Suggested selling price:
\$125,280

TOTALS:

Monthly rate	\$ 29,118
Yearly rate	\$ 349,416
5-Year agreed cost (lease)	\$1,747,080

If option to purchase were exercised,
cost of purchase four (4) landfills...\$ 491,380
(operation would transfer to County)

Municipal Contract to provide Waste Collection and Removal for period
of one (1) year, commencing November 1, 1974, between Board of Public
Works and Safety and Jamax Corporation, Max Gibson, president.
Cost for one year.....\$ 393,192

HELP REPORTS

NEW LANDFILL FOR VIGO COUNTY

At the April 30th meeting of the Vigo County Board of Health, the following statement was read:

H.E.L.P. has been informed that, in compliance with regulation SPC-18, a 5th landfill in Vigo County will be in operation by June 1. This landfill will handle hazardous wastes imported from outside the county. On behalf of the citizens of Vigo County, H.E.L.P. asks the Board of Health

1. What is the exact location of the landfill?
2. What kind of soil does it contain? Has the area been shaft-mined?
3. What provisions have been made for monitoring water and air pollution in the vicinity of the landfill?

We have had a partial answer to the first question. The new landfill is to be immediately adjacent to the present south fill in Linton Township -- "mostly south of the present fill." We know that the Board of Health is investigating the matter but have received no further information. Current litigation concerning alleged well pollution in the Victory Mine landfill area may well make answers hard to come by, judging by previous experience.

PRAIRIE CREEK PARK TO BE FORMALLY DEDICATED

Prairie Creek Park, our newest recreation and nature area, will have a Grand Opening on June 2nd, 1975. Formal activities will begin at 10 o'clock with flag-raising by the Fort Minglewood Long Rifle Association. Tours will be available through the day.

The park is located in the southwest part of the county, 1 1/2 miles east of Hwy. 63 on County Road 47. Directional signs will be placed at intersections in the area.

Before development, the 100 acres consisted of about two-thirds forest and one-third open area; some of the latter had been used for active recreation and the remainder farmed with sound conservation measures. The park department will utilize the forest as an educational and aesthetic appreciation area. Trails with Indian names meander through the wooded area. The Miami Trail passes through one of the best examples of old-growth sugar maple in Vigo County. There will be foot trails only to protect the environment.

At the park entrance is a two-acre conservation pond--designed with tapered banks so that senior citizens and handicapped persons will be able to fish from the shoreline. All buildings will be developed to take care of wheelchairs and handicapped individuals.

Two softball diamonds and a youth baseball field are already in use. In the near future a multi-purpose court for tennis, basketball, ice-skating (weather permitting) and deck games will be added. A relocated log cabin for a visitors' center is also planned.

A creative playground with Indian theme is under construction. A teepee, a lookout tower, tube slide (donated by Mr. and Mrs. Ellis of S. 7th St.), a slide from the chimney of a log cabin, a fireman's pole in the log cabin are all being incorporated. A foot of sand will provide cushioning.

(continued on page 2)

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Swimming, boating (no outboards) and fishing will be available as Mother Nature cooperates. Picnic shelters, rest rooms, campsites are now ready. A custodian is living in a trailer at the park--he will patrol, collect permits and fees. Concessions are planned for next year

ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of H.E.L.P., Inc., was held at 11:00 a.m. Thursday, May 15, at Washington Avenue Presbyterian Church. After routine reports were accepted, the following resolution was passed unanimously:

Be it hereby Resolved that:

As the League of Women Voters, during calendar year 1974, extended local action authority to all its committees, and as during calendar year 1975 the League of Women Voters is organizing its first committee to study local health needs, and further as Vigo County Co-Ordinating Council and Women's Political Caucus have become effective influences in community affairs, it is the considered conclusion of the voting members in H.E.L.P., Inc., that it is in the best interests of H.E.L.P., Inc., that this corporation be dissolved in order to avoid duplication of effort between H.E.L.P. and the above-mentioned organizations whose purposes and interests are, for the most part, undistinguishable. Indeed, those H.E.L.P.ers who wish to may unite with some other group and attain a more complete realization of one of the original purposes of H.E.L.P.: "providing a means for all to work together for the common good."

In order that this resolution may be carried out be it further resolved that: the current Board of Directors continue to serve in the capacity of a dissolution committee to insure that all legal requirements are met.

The Board of Directors advised this action with regret, but also with pride in H.E.L.P.'s accomplishments during the past fourteen years and in the number of "H.E.L.P.-trained" women serving in civic capacities throughout the community.

The League of Women Voters has extended an invitation to all H.E.L.P. members to join the League and work in the area of their choice. Jane Wood, membership chairman of the League, will be happy to answer any questions. Her phone is 299-2034.

A COMMENT FROM H.E.L.P.'S FIRST PRESIDENT

H.E.L.P. was founded in 1961 by Jacqueline Becker, Elvira Carle, Jane Hazledine, and Joan Marx. Jane was also the first president of the organization, and we asked her to comment on the dissolution of the corporation. She calls our attention first to H.E.L.P.'s Statement of Purpose:

H.E.L.P., Housewives' Effort for Local Progress, was born of the realization that women must assume their share of responsibility for community progress. Since good citizenship entails a coordinated utilization of the time and talents of all citizens, H.E.L.P. will serve as a clearing house and reference center to receive, catalog, and where feasible, implement action on community problems. Realizing that progress is no mere accident, H.E.L.P. is dedicated to providing a means for all to work together for the common good.

"...And this we did. In a sense the mission of H.E.L.P. has been fulfilled, not that all goals have been reached or all problems solved. That will never come about.

(continued on page 3)

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"H.E.L.P.'s great worth has been that of a catalyst, an agency through which responsible citizens could effect changes, air wants, complaints and opinions. H.E.L.P. proved the worth of citizen interest. H.E.L.P. stimulated introspection and awareness. H.E.L.P. was a sounding board, a release, a listening post. H.E.L.P. was a friend to any and all with valid questions. H.E.L.P. was neutral ground. For this it will be missed.

"H.E.L.P. has been a real ombudsman, representative of every member of the community. The list of accomplishments must be found elsewhere, but that intangible dedication to finding and speaking the facts is immeasurable.

"These have been the finest gals in the world--alert, intelligent, persistent, perceptive, sensible, and determined. The hours given to this community are incalculable, the rewards great, the disappointments many.

"The need for H.E.L.P. will remain. H.E.L.P. as an organization is leaving the scene, not because there is no longer a need, rather that the need is so great. Other agencies now provide a means whereby we can continue to be effective. And we still believe in a continuing need for responsible, courageous, investigative reporting by TV, radio, newspapers and individuals.

"H.E.L.P. will still be watching. Its voice will be heard from different quarters, under other flags. H.E.L.P. has been an influential agent in the political life of 20th century Vigo County. I am proud of having been a part of it."

Jane Hazledine

ANN BASS LUNCHEON SPEAKER

At the luncheon following the H.E.L.P. annual meeting, Ann Bass spoke on her experiences as a member of the school corporation's Committee for the Physical Facilities Survey of Vigo County Elementary Schools. She spoke of the organization of the committee and criteria used in examining each school. The final report is not yet available to committee members or to the public.

CITY COUNCIL SUPPORTS HOMEOWNERS

At the City Council meeting of April 10, H.E.L.P. was pleased to see a group of citizens who live in the 2500 block of Schaal St. successfully petition the Council to prevent a portion of their block from being rezoned from residential to commercial.

Former Councils have usually turned a deaf ear to the pleas of ordinary citizens who were trying to maintain the livability and marketable value of their neighborhood property. Spot rezoning may raise taxes temporarily, but it lowers the value of the whole neighborhood in the long run. We are glad that several of our Councilmen realize this.

SAFETY FIRST -- OR LAST?

What are the County Commissioners going to do about the intersection of State Roads 42 and 46? Wide lanes and traffic signals have not prevented several tragedies. Visibility at night is poor, and an inexpensive investment of reflective paint on the median curbs might save more than one life. It's easy to pass the buck on responsibility, but can't the Commissioners act for the safety of their own people?

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING NEEDED IN CITY PARKS

The Mother's Day concert of the Youth Symphony at Larrison Pavilion in Deming Park was somewhat marred by the winter's accumulation of dirt and debris in the shelter. Shouldn't good maintenance have first priority in our parks?

THIS AND THAT

Plan now to attend a meeting at the WCIEDD office on June 12, to learn the status of Region Seven's participation in improving surface water quality under Stream Pollution Bill 208. Time will be announced.

We congratulate Keith Ruble for his devotion to the recreational and aesthetic needs of Vigo County citizens. Isn't it time for the County Council to provide adequate compensation to the administrative staff of the County Park Department?

Citizens south of Riley complain that it is almost impossible to get private lines--some have as many as eight on so-called four-party lines. Some lines have more than eight.

A well-qualified structural engineer in the employ of the school corporation might have saved many of the design errors in the new buildings throughout the county.

NOTICE TO H.E.L.P. BOARD OF DIRECTORS: There will be a meeting at 2751 College Ave. at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, June 17, to begin plans for dissolution. Any corporation member interested in assisting is welcome.

At the May 30th County Health Board meeting, Dr. Schumaker stated that he anticipates a severe mosquito problem in the county this summer.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? Call Marilynn Williams at 235-9946 or Mario Fox at 894-2453, or write H.E.L.P., 300½ S. 5th St., Terre Haute, 47807.

H. E. L. P.
300½ S. 5th ST.
TERRE HAUTE, IND. 47801



Mrs. John A. Boyd
112 Berkeley Drive
Terre Haute, Indiana 47803

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE
H.E.L.P. REPORTS

SPECIAL ISSUE ON EDUCATION

Rec'd 5-15-73

SPECIAL COLLECTION
Community Affairs File

Vigo County Public Library

This special edition of the HELP Newsletter is prompted by recent highly controversial proposals by the Vigo County School Board and by Supt. Kenneth Cotton's recent accusations leveled at HELP.

Supt. Cotton has asked if "HELP is being used by certain individuals with axes to grind" and has claimed that HELP always opposes School Board positions and never proposes constructive programs.

Following is a copy of Supt. Cotton's statement directed to HELP at the April 9 School Board Meeting in reaction to HELP'S questioning the wisdom of the staggering of school hours:

The administration staff regrets that HELP did not see fit to approach the staff directly concerning the questions raised in its letter presented at the board meeting on March 26, 1973. The superintendent and/or members of the administrative staff would be pleased to meet with HELP committees or to attend general HELP meetings. This practice was observed in the past and no member of the staff ever refused a HELP invitation. At such meetings two way communication in an atmosphere of mutual respect is possible.

Some school officials wonder if the name of HELP is being used by certain individuals with axes to grind or by individuals with vested interests. The official minutes of the Vigo County School Corporation for the last three years reveal that HELP has made many statements, all in opposition, to programs that were being considered by the Board. It would seem reasonable that HELP, if it is truly dedicated to local progress, could have found at least one school program to support during the three year period that would have contributed to the progress of schools.

The administrative staff makes recommendations to the Board of School Trustees only after long and intensive research and study. No recommendation has been made by capricious fiat. Perhaps HELP has research findings or resources that are not available to the administrative staff of the Vigo County School Corporation.

It is indeed old-fashioned to continue believing, or to have ever believed, that the most productive learning takes place early in the day. All educational research available to trained educators shows that learning in either morning or afternoon is equally productive. In schools with dual sessions, no measurable difference in learning between morning and afternoon sessions has been obtained.

This administration has never used indirect methods of presentation of change as HELP inferred by innuendo in their March 26, statement. To the contrary, this administration has been frank in their presentation of all proposals.

In public board meeting October 9, 1972, the Superintendent presented a proposed building program and requested that it be referred to old business. On October 23, 1972, in a lengthy prepared statement the program was outlined and adopted by a 4 to 1 vote; only 5 members were present. This administration stated "The program will culminate in a K-5; 6-8; 9-12 organization". On November 27, 1972, Mrs. Tarbox, HELP president, raised questions concerning the location of new schools. Those questions were answered in detail on December 11, 1972. All of these answers were stated in televised and reported board meetings. This administration has never resorted to subterfuge to effect change. The business of educating boys and girls is too vital to be compromised.

The administration seeks and welcomes informed and concerned sources of public opinion. All constructive suggestions are considered.

At no time has the administration attempted to confuse the public or to keep it ignorant about its plans. False charges such as those presented by HELP do not develop the sound educational plans or confidence essential to progress.

It is requested in the spirit of fair play and better communication that HELP print this reply to their statement in the next HELP Newsletter. In this manner the public will be better informed.

HELP is neither sensitive nor paranoid, and it took Supt. Cottom's attack at the April 9 school board meeting in stride. Down through our history we have asked hard, probing questions of public officials in many areas -- and we can understand that this has at times made people uncomfortable. But since our mission from inception has been to protect the people of this community through investigation and report when such seemed indicated, we felt more commended than put down when it became obvious to one and all that we are a sufficiently viable force in this part of Indiana to evoke heated response. There have been times when we have wondered how much difference a group of housewives could make when it stated opinions on matters of significance in the city of Terre Haute and Vigo County. The support which so quickly came from unexpected sources when we were publicly -- and so unprofessionally and personally -- attacked made us once more aware that we are serving a valuable function and are recognized as so doing by many people.

Because we are aware of the possibilities of editorializing and of selective inclusion, now that we might be expected to feel a need to defend ourselves, we thought the fairest thing to do would be to collect and publish in one issue all comments made in our newsletter since July, 1970, when Supt. Cottom went into office. Statements made at school board meetings and in the local newspaper are less comprehensive than our newsletter reports. The approach, however, is consistent. HELP has utilized all available avenues, from WAAC editorials to personal interviews, to make itself heard in the area of education. For the present purpose we focus on our newsletter accounts.

Cottom has said that we could have found at least one thing to commend. As you read the remarks below, you will see that we have given such credit as seemed due at various points to the Vigo County School Corporation and its administrators. It is unfortunately true that we have at times felt that questions had to be asked and criticism levied. This we have tried to do as objectively and rationally as possible. We suggest that you read the following pages, which list with dates all remarks made in the newsletter concerning schools and the school board. Some matters have been resolved -- others remain very much with us and in the public eye. Decide for yourself whether HELP has had a personal axe to grind, or whether it has performed a public service in line with its traditional role.

October, 1970

HELP shares the concern of parents for the free lunch program for school children. We offer the following for your information . . . (Report of Congress passing the National School Lunch Act--P.L. 91-248.)

. . . To focus attention on the need for school lunches for needy children the National Council of Churches Crusade Against Hunger is conducting a National School Lunch Campaign. The campaign hopes to draw attention to the relationship between hunger and education. The Crusade has asked support from religious,

business, professional, and poor people's organizations and has issued the following suggestions:

- (a) Citizens should begin forming school lunch committees now.
- (b) The committee should become informed on the new law now.
- (c) The committee should visit its school board now to find out what plans are being made to implement the new law.
- (d) School boards should be requested to use the poverty level guidelines now.
- (e) School boards should be requested to publicize their guidelines.

QUESTIONS IN ORBIT

Why did the School Board choose (but not unanimously) to overlook choices of names for the two new high schools submitted by the committees appointed to select names?

November, 1970

QUESTIONS AT PUBLIC MEETINGS DRAW DIFFERENT KINDS OF RESPONSES

--From the SCHOOL BOARD

On October 26 HELP asked the School Board four questions about how the National School Lunch Act as Amended would be implemented. At the November 9 School Board meeting, Mrs. Beulah P. Dorney, Cafeteria Director, answered these questions fully and satisfactorily. Mimeographed copies of the questions and answers were distributed to school trustees and the audience.

January, 1971

[In an anticipation of its 10th anniversary, HELP planned a "happening" and listed coming attractions for the next month.]

EVERYBODY'S COMING!

In response to letters from Mayor Larrison to city officials, and letters from HELP to county officials, the HELP Anniversary Committee has received responses from the following:

VIGO COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION. John Miesel, Charles Clark, and Mrs. Georgia R. Cole will be in attendance to discuss the exhibit showing the diversity of overall instructional programs. Possibly a Mobile Psychological Testing Van will be on exhibit with trained personnel to describe services offered.

HELP COMMENDS:

CRUFT SCHOOL for its program to help children with visual perception problems.

March, 1971

QUESTIONS IN ORBIT

Is the VCSC "saving money" by dropping some forty classroom teachers or just re-arranging expenditures?

April, 1971

TWO VIEWS TO STAFF REDUCTION

Public schools are everybody's business. They have major responsibility in this country for educating the public. Reports that the VCSC would not renew contracts of nearly forty teachers for next year were reports that concerned all residents of the county -- not just teachers, not just school administration.

With this in mind two HELP members asked for an interview with Supt. Cotton and heard his explanation of state wide fiscal problems supported by quotations from the Indiana School Boards Association's executive secretary, Lowell C. Rose, such as:

(April 12, 1971) It is time to establish priorities on which to base decisions as to what your school corporation can and cannot do. Options available for bringing appropriations with permissible limits will include: 1. Program reduction. 2. Staff reduction. 3. Limitations on planned increases in salaries and programs. 4. A combination of any or all of the first three. These decisions will not be easy.

(April 19, 1971) ... Given all of the present circumstances the only reaction which appears to make sense is for each school board, with its superintendent, to determine what it can and cannot do with the funds available... It will be difficult and uncomfortable for school board members and superintendents to make the kinds of decisions the present situation forces upon them... Schools are now facing at least a two-year period in which most corporations will not have the money to do what they would like to do.

From the teachers and other citizens HELP continues to hear differing views -- they fear increased class size despite efforts to prove the contrary and are not persuaded that the figures quoted accurately represent savings. The Teachers' Federation has opposed the reduction in staff. Pupils and parents express concern that class offerings will be reduced. And no one denies that the School Corporation will be losing some fine teachers.

The quality of life in any community depends greatly upon its public education -- especially the adequacy of education available to the young. It must include as broad an opportunity as possible for pupils from all walks of life. It must not be only for the elite or weighted to favor the academically talented.

If money saving is the goal, HELP is not yet persuaded that this might not be done by cutting costs other than those of instruction.

WE ARE JUST ASKING

With election of the school board for Vigo County due in May at the time of the primary, doesn't it seem odd that ALL votes should be split 4 to 3? In theory this is a non-partisan body, dedicated to getting the best possible schools for our money.

The law of averages would indicate that there should be unanimity of opinion now and then if the concern of the board was truly for good schools rather than politics or personal ego.

HELP COMMENTS:

The Katherine Hamilton Mental Health Center and the Vigo County School Corporation for working out a lease of the Thompson School facility. Instead of becoming a decaying eyesore, the grand old building will be used by the Beacon School of the Valley and the Vigo County Association for Retarded Children, and enable expansion of the work of the two associations.

March, 1972

The Indiana Primary elections are scheduled for the first Tuesday in May, and candidates for the national, state, and local elected officials will be indicated to the political parties by voter preference. HOWEVER School Board members for the VIGO COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD do not face a November run-off vote, but are chosen during the May primary.

Our schools should be of vital concern ... the largest tax wedge goes to their maintenance and operation, our children are directly affected and our community indirectly affected by what goes on.

HELP, therefore, urges you to inform yourself on the issues and the candidates, and to vote at the May primary. We are devoting the bulk of our bulletin to informing you -- you will have to take care of the voting. Please do.

SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES:

As of press date, the following have filed as candidates for the School Board:

From District I -- Iverson C. Bell
Susan Crittenden
James E. Rentschler
John J. Vale

From District III -- Joe R. Burton
Charlotte E. Caldwell
Noble R. Corey
James R. Daugherty
Max W. Lynch

District I encompasses the city of Terre Haute, Harrison Township.
District III includes Otter Creek and Nevins Townships.

Two of the 4 candidates from District I are to be elected, one from District III.

FOR IN-DEPTH INFORMATION:

SCHOOL CANDIDATES MEETING APRIL 12

HELP will sponsor a meeting at which School Board Candidates will have an opportunity to make their views heard by local taxpayers. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 12, 7:30 P.M. in one of the high school auditoriums. Which auditorium will be announced in the near future through the local news media.

HELP MEMBERS: Please mark your calendar and tell your friends, particularly parents of children in the Vigo County School System, to plan to attend this meeting and to hear how candidates for District I and District III propose to perform in a multi-million dollar business operation.

TOUR OF RIO GRANDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HELP members will join the League of Women Voters for a tour of the Rio Grande Elementary School on Tuesday, April 4.

HELP COMMENTS:

The School and Community Advisory Committee and calls your attention to the fine service it is performing in meeting the instructional needs of our Vigo County school children.

IN-SERVICE REORIENTATION PROGRAM FOR COUNSELORS

Forty counselors of VCSC are now undergoing an intensive in-service reorientation program, as recommended by the School and Community Advisory Committee. Meeting weekly at South Vigo High School, the focus is on how counseling services can be improved. The 6 to 9 sessions began February 29 under the direction of Dr. Andrew J. Horn, Dr. Merle Ohlsen and Dr. Lawrence Passmore. The three areas of in-service training include: Group Counseling, Behavior Modification; and Tests in Counseling-Vocational Counseling.

HELP has long been concerned with the lack of adequate counseling for our young people, as indicated by the questions raised by HELP at the March 12 School Board Meeting. Because the labor market appears to be changing and educational preparedness for tomorrow's jobs have great significance for today's students, HELP asked the following questions:

1. Is the need greater than ever for more emphasis on quality and sufficient quantity of counseling for all students in every curriculum?
2. Do children from disadvantaged homes enjoy the same quality of counseling as their peers who are college-bound, or does attention continue to be paid mainly to the college-bound achiever so that the needs of hundreds of other students in need of counseling are ignored or are passed over because of an inadequate counseling staff?
3. What is being done for and about problem students---those lacking motivation and interest, those with lower academic ability, psychological problems, trouble with the law, even the goof-off?
4. Is every student, regardless of his choice of curriculum, given counseling relating to what courses should be taken, and personal counseling to help him or her come to some realistic conclusions about what he or she intends to do when turned out with a high school diploma?
5. Are both boy and girl students encouraged to take academically challenging courses which are professionally oriented and intellectually demanding?

The above indicate the scope of HELP's interest in the counseling program in the Vigo County Schools, and we urge that the School Board give consideration to the many facets of a good counseling program.

AND, PERTAINING TO THE DRUG PROBLEM:

As more drug problems are surfacing in Vigo County, HELP checked with the authorities regarding to the handling of the problem at the schools and during school hours. We are all aware that the schools have no jurisdiction after school hours, nor off school property.

If a teacher suspects drug use, or observes symptoms resembling those of drug use, this is reported to one of the school deans and to the school nurse.

The nurse also makes an independent observation, and if the evidence indicates it, the student's parents are called.

The next step is a conference which includes the dean, the parents, and the school nurse. Every effort is made to bring in the parents--an attendance department official calls on the home if there is no phone, a registered letter may be sent, or if a welfare agency is involved they are contacted and a case worker is sent to visit the home.

If, after the conference, there still seems to be a problem of illegal drugs, the principal or dean calls in the juvenile authorities for a conference and the narcotics division of the police department is contacted in an effort to get to the source of the student's supply.

Although this is the end of direct school involvement, Assistant Chief of Police, Gerald Lowdermilk, gives us the subsequent sequence. The emphasis is getting at the source of supply--the pusher.

Both Mr. Lowdermilk and Chief of Detectives, Frank Hoffman, stress that the accused juvenile is protected as much as possible. Names are not released to the news media, and all investigative records are privileged information. A formal request must be made to the juvenile judge or circuit court judge, if anyone wishes to view the records.

Vigo County teachers have had some in-service training relating to symptoms and psychology of the drug user, while school nurses have had more detailed training in this area.

As for the student...every effort is made to encourage him to undergo treatment at one of the several local drug treatment centers.

April, 1972:

SEX EDUCATION FOR VIGO COUNTY:

HELP has a double-barreled concern with Sex education. The number one cause of drop-outs among girls is marriage and/or pregnancy. This fact, coupled with the near epidemic proportions of venereal disease in this country which now strikes 2.5 million Americans each year, makes it obvious that the need for information in this area is vital.

Accordingly, HELP has inquired about what "sex education" guidelines are recommended by the State of Indiana. Our reply, from Malcolm A. Mason, director of the division of health education of the State Board of Health for Indiana, states "to the best of our knowledge there are no state guidelines operating in the area of sex education... our philosophy has always encouraged local planning in all areas of health education. We encourage school systems, with the cooperation of the community, to develop its own policy and to establish a program that best meets the needs of the persons served by the program."

Since no state guidelines are available, we learned that "the biological approach is used in sex education locally". This information comes from Charles M. Clark, director of secondary education VCSC, and William J. Hamrick, assistant superintendent of instruction VCSC. Classes in family hygiene, home economics, health and biology deal with the matter of sex education and venereal disease according to Mrs. Susie Dewey, secondary consultant of the VCSC.

Is this adequate to get essential information to all students?

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

On March 27, HELP presented a statement to the Vigo County School Board (which also appeared in both the Terre Haute Star and Tribune as "Letter to the Editor"). Among the points included were bus safety factors: children standing on buses, maintenance of discipline and protection from rowdies on school buses.

Because HELP feels that the rules and regulations pertaining to school buses are of more than passing interest, we present here excerpts from the "School Transportation Code", Indiana Acts of 1965, Chapter 260, in response to a number of questions HELP referred to Jack L. Summe, Director of School Traffic Safety for the State of Indiana:

Question: What are the laws pertaining to the hiring of School Bus Drivers?

Answer: School Transportation Code, page 5, Article III, "Qualifications and Compensation of School Bus Drivers --- (followed by other general questions and quotations from legal sources).

EDITORIAL - NOW THAT THE DUST HAS SETTLED

HELP wonders if there isn't a message to be read into the results of the recent School Board election. The people spoke on Election Day and fortunately refused to be maneuvered by some of the curious, if not questionable, tactics used during the campaign.

The appearance out of apparently nowhere, source unknown, of a small, obviously professionally printed card bearing the names of a so-called "slate" for School Board was one device. This was even more interesting because the candidates whose names appeared on this "slate" denied publicly or privately having given their permission for their names to be publicized this way. Secondly, the continuing intrusion of partisan politics into the School Board election is another tactic which HELP finds highly unpalatable and a ploy which, hopefully, will not be used in future School Board elections in the name of education.

Is it possible that during the campaign some of the candidates for the non-partisan School Board were not to be manipulated? And on Election Day, did the voting public refuse to be manipulated?

It is very interesting to speculate as to what lies ahead for the school children of Vigo County. Meanwhile, HELP congratulates the winners: Mrs. Charlotte Caldwell, Dr. Iverson Bell, and Mr. John Valle.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN SCHOOL EVALUATION?

Since considerable importance seems to be attached to "special first class" and "first class" commissions awarded to schools in the VCSC by the Division of Inspec-

tion from the Indiana State Department of Public Instruction, as related to the quality of the educational program, HELP was interested in determining the criteria for issuance of these commissions.

In a letter dated March 24, 1972, HELP wrote to Jan P. Regnier, Director, Division of Inspection, asking: "What are the criteria for issuance of special first class commissions?" First class commissions? Can a PTA group supplement monies on a per-child basis toward larger number of books in the school?

The response, dated March 27, 1972, enclosed a copy of form 36-A--a check sheet used by the Division of Inspection with the assistance of local school authorities prior to and during a school visitation. Also enclosed was an excerpt from the Administrative Handbook explaining the different criteria used to recommend various commission levels to the State Board of Education. The response also stated: "A PTA group can supplement monies toward a larger number of books in a local school."

According to rule G-2, Classification of Commissioned Schools, section 2, A First-Class Commission is valid for three years or until the school is reinspected; and a "Special First-Class" Commission is valid for three years or until the school is reinspected.

One feature of the check-list of particular interest to HELP is that it is four pages long, two and a half pages of which bear the following instructions: "The following evaluation of the school should be made by the entire staff or committee of teachers. The teacher committee chairman should sign in the space below. This form should be completed and ready for the inspector when he visits the school corporation."

Items for teacher evaluation includes: (1) administration; (2) basic philosophy of education; (3) supervision and curriculum; (4) classroom furnishings; (5) the library and instructional materials; (6) other instructional materials; (7) laboratory facilities; (8) cafeteria and lunchroom facilities; (9) guidance and personnel records; (10) pupil activity program; (11) reports; (12) admission and promotions; (13) the school plant; (14) administrative offices; (15) local requirements in addition to state requirements.

According to statistics given to the VCSC by Jan P. Regnier, and distributed at the March 27 School Board Meeting, Vigo County has seven special first class commissions out of thirty nine schools.

VIGO COUNTY SCHOOL LIBRARY SURVEY

The committee of HELP members who conducted the recent telephone survey of the Vigo County School Corporation libraries were more than gratified by the courtesy and cooperation of the 39 school principals who answered the questions put to them. HELP also appreciates the news media; particularly the Terre Haute Tribune and the Terre Haute Star, for the coverage given the survey.

Several observations have been made by HELP as a result of the survey. Some principals said they did not know anything about the library situation, and some "assumed" there would be no reduction of library services. A number of the principals told HELPers they received little information about libraries, and a few did not feel free to express themselves regarding future plans or recommendations for libraries.

The implication seems to be that there is a lack of communication somewhere along the chain of command. Either a lack of interest or a certain apprehension also seems indicated. HELP would be interested to know why.

CONCERNING OUR CONCERN FOR SCHOOLS

HELP will be sponsoring a special open meeting with C. Kenneth Cottom as our guest on Thursday, May 18, at 7:30 p.m. Susan Ward will be our hostess in her home at 800 South 6th Street.

This is an open meeting and you are urged to attend.

June, 1972

MOTHERS MAY VOLUNTEER

Some confusion existing on the subject of volunteers to assist in supervising children during school lunch hours or at recess has been cleared up as a result of a meeting between HELP members and Superintendent of Schools, C. Kenneth Cottom.

Contrary to what one mother had reported to HELP, Mothers may contribute their services in supervisory capacities during lunchtime and recess. They may not instruct children, however, since that function is reserved to licensed teachers.

Although school is now dismissed for the summer, this information may be helpful to parents who are concerned with some reported lack of adequate supervision during these "free" periods, and perhaps they can help correct the situation when school resumes in the fall.

HELP COMMENTS:

The new "School Away From School" concept initiated as a part of the summer school program for high school students in Vigo County. Still on trial, and for a limited number of applicants, but we feel an important new approach.

ALSO

A technical listing of duties for school librarians, which is said to "more than reinforce HELP's stand for increasing school library services in Vigo County".

Quote: from Mr. Lynn Brown, Instructional Media Division, Department of Public Instruction - to HELP: "Anytime you have just passing out books, you don't have a program. It takes people with experience and knowledge and training and know-how to initiate and maintain a library program."

September, 1972

HAVE TRUCK, WILL COLLECT THEIR OWN

Did you know that the refuse collection bids received by the Vigo County School Corporation were: Cohen, \$61,800 and Gibson, \$71,600 -- each were two year contracts. After receiving the bids, the Corporation decided to buy its own truck with a compactor at a cost of \$28,865. The Corporation expects eighteen years of service from the truck and current reports show a probable savings of at least \$18,900 per year. HELP plans to inspect the new vehicle soon. Watch the next issue for a complete report.

VIGO COUNTY'S DROPOUT RATE LOWER

A report has been received by the Education Committee from Mrs. Sparkle G. Crowe, Director, Division of Pupil Personnel Services, State Department of Public Instruction, reporting Vigo County's school dropout rate for 1971-72. The rate is reported to be 20.6, a decrease from 21.1 in 1970-71. This is a favorable comparison to the national dropout rate of 25. The reasons most frequently given by students for dropping out, according to the State report, include disinterest in school, physical disabilities, disruptive home environment, marriage, pregnancy, and disciplinary problems. One of the reasons most frequently given was the need or desire of the student to earn money.

November, 1972

LIBRARY BOARD

In 1969 HELP raised the question of having the Library Board separated from the School Board. Mr. Ed Howard, Director of the Vigo County Public Library, recommended to the School Board that he prepare a study on the feasibility of a separate (appointed) library board. Mr. Howard reported at the May, 1969 meeting, noting "that elected board members are subject to recall and the voice of the electorate decides whether they succeed themselves in office. The appointed board, or members thereof, can be reappointed at the discretion of the appointing authority for up to four terms or 16 years." He recommended, at that time, that the school-library board arrangement be continued for the present if the board FELT IT WAS ABLE TO GIVE THE TIME REQUIRED FOR THE CONDUCT OF LIBRARY BUSINESS.

However, in October, 1972, Mr. Howard called for a separation of the school-library board. Since the time is approaching for building a new library--requiring the undivided attention of the board--is the present school-library board able to give the time required to the conduct of library business?

December, 1972

VIGO COUNTY SCHOOLS: SOME CONSIDERATIONS

HELP, along with many individual citizens, is greatly concerned both about the decisions which are being made in regard to schools in Vigo County, and by the way these decisions are reached. HELP has always believed that the people in the community should be informed---and, in turn, inform others---which is why members attend public meetings of various agencies (as they are entitled to do by law) and make themselves vocal when issues are raised which seem to have implications worthy of discussion and consideration.

To have parents who call school board members with legitimate questions personally abused and queried as to "which pressure group they belong to" is not informative nor helpful.

The school situation is at a critical stage. Once buildings are erected, or lots purchased for schools, it is too late for meaningful consideration of alternatives.

Savings to taxpayers is the usual defense for larger and larger schools, both at the elementary and secondary levels. Even if fiscal considerations were paramount (and HELP questions this automatic assumption of priorities), the rationale cannot hold up.

The Council of Educational Facility Planners in the September, 1969 guide (the authoritative source for school planners) says (p. 31):

"There are definite improvements in educational efficiency and economy of operation as the size (of schools) increases to approximately 300 pupils. From 300 to 500 pupils, advantages of economy of operation tend to be offset by educational disadvantages, and beyond approximately 500, the disadvantages of large size may become increasingly more apparent."

According to this source the problems now encountered in the North and South Vigo High Schools were to be expected, as structures so large are not recommended either for reasons of economy or service to students.

HELP believes in unification of town and county services, as evidenced by past work toward a joint health board and a joint park board. We believe the unified Terre Haute and Vigo County School District can work, and deplore statements issued by public school officials which might have the effect of encouraging rivalry.

HELP also wonders what the overall effect of eliminating so many small neighborhood schools will have. Having a long time interest in zoning and city planning, the organization would anticipate neighborhood decline as families follow schools to the suburbs or the country.

Will the voice of HELP---or individuals---be heard? Or will answers---if forthcoming at all---be evasive and inclined to discourage further inquiry? TO WHOM DO THE SCHOOLS ULTIMATELY BELONG?

(There have been no newsletters between this December issue and the copy now in your hands.)

Recent expressions of HELP's concern for better schools include the following statement made by President Susan Ward at the March 26, 1973, School Board meeting:

HELP wonders if the real reasons are being given by Supt. Cotton and the Vigo County School Corporation for suggesting radical changes in the community school practices. Staggering of school time, we are told, means that we don't need to buy as many buses to provide increased busing for our children. Staggering of school hours does mean more intensive bus utilization, but not real savings on transportation costs as buses presumably wear out according to number of miles driven rather than number of years driven. We may get by with fewer buses for the 1973-74 academic year, but we would have to replace them sooner. So what real savings is accomplished?

Is the actual reason instead to condition parents to the change in school hours which will be necessary several years hence when all -- or virtually all -- are bused if reorganization of elementary schools and loss of neighborhood schools eventuates? This is the kind of step-by-step, indirect presentation of change which has been used by the board and its administrators before.

Is another actual reason for the proposed school staggering so that each schoolroom at North and South Vigo High Schools could be used an additional hour each day, thus making room for freshmen there in September?

And is a reason that we want the freshmen there so that athletic coaches would have an additional year to provide training?

Will we find our sixth graders in the junior high schools in the fall, with automatic and undiscussed elimination (or cutback) of the Academically Talented Classes?

Will a program considered by many to be among the best within the system be phased out so subtly that request for continuation from parents and teachers comes too late?

Is the effect on elementary children of late arrival at school after their initial freshness and energy has been dissipated being considered? Is it old-fashioned to go on believing that the most productive learning takes place early in the day? That afternoon school sessions are less effective? Many teachers down through the ages have devised teaching schedules on that assumption, and think that early learning is demonstrably better.

What about working mothers? Are their young children to pay the price of turning into latch-key children because economic necessity in times of spiraling prices demands that both parents hold jobs?

Aren't low income families discriminated against in the event of larger combined elementary schools? One-car and no-car families cannot transport children to kindergarten; but these same children must go into grade one and compete with others who have had not only kindergarten but often one or two years of nursery school. These families also cannot attend school programs that the children are participating in if they are now within walking distance.

What happens to outside play after school when elementary school children are not dismissed until 3:50 p.m.? What happens to music lessons? Or participation at the Y activities? Or Scouts?

Is the vast inconvenience to families of having children leaving home at three different hours and arriving back home at three different hours not even worthy of consideration?

Will parents and teachers be consulted about these -- or other -- proposed changes? Or is the board interested in input from informed and concerned sources such as these?

HELP beseeches the school authorities to come forth with solid reasons for acts which seem to have tremendous implications for the children and home life of the community. HELP also beseeches teachers and parents to make their opinions heard by personally contacting individual school board members. What we seem to need is two-way communication, not a continuation and intensification of rule by seemingly capricious fiat.

Statement read by President Susan Ward at the April 9 School Board Meeting:

Of immediate concern are ramifications of the school staggering proposal now before the board.

HELP has already voiced objection in a WAAC editorial rebuttal on the following grounds: "The VCSC has given much lip service to unification of our Terre Haute and Vigo County student bodies. HELP applauds such statements and any action which would seem to make our present unified town-county system in actuality one, with better educational opportunity thereby accorded to all. To have a transportation system which results in lessening contact between these two elements, with the probability of renewed and intensified division, seems counterproductive. Supt. Cotton has also given verbal support to integration as complies with the law of the land. To have Harrison township -- the area with the heaviest black student

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population -- arriving and leaving school at a different hour from certain predominantly white areas -- would have the effect of reinstating certain segregationist practices. HELP wonders if national agencies such as Health, Education, and Welfare would approve of the result of this action. Or local citizens and groups who are working toward the goal of equal and combined education for all of our children."

But there are additional objections. Traffic control is already a major problem in the vicinity of both North and South High Schools. The sheriff's department says no inquiry has come from the VCSC as to the effect of turning a second set of school buses loose at 4:00 p.m. There is already congestion especially in the 7th and Davis area and at 3rd and Davis.

Mr. Barton, in charge of traffic control for the city police, also reports no contact from the VCSC, and that he foresees certain difficulties.

Even a cursory examination of local industry would show many workers leaving jobs at 4:00 p.m. Columbia Records has between fifty and sixty, Anaconda has more than two hundred, and there are many other plants to consider. Often replacements would be arriving then for those who were leaving to further add to the congestion. Can we afford to intensify traffic problems which -- in certain areas -- are already acute? Isn't consultation with those responsible for highway safety and efficiency highly to be desired?

Ecology is a major concern now as we realize that limitations of our natural resources demand conservation and the wisest possible utilization. We as a nation are faced with crude oil and gas shortages which may even result in rationing. Is it wise to move toward more busing, which means, in effect, more consumption of these limited materials as well as more air pollution in a city where this is already a serious threat to the health and safety of us all?

Isn't the reaction of teachers to staggering worthy of consideration? The teachers' association queried its membership on the proposal, and received a 43 per cent response on the secondary level, with 78.2 per cent against the plan. The elementary teachers had a 65 per cent response, with 90.8 per cent opposed. Past action of the board has left in doubt the extent to which the board valued the opinion of teachers on matters pertaining to school policy and procedures. But HELP goes on record as believing that the teaching staff has valuable insight and must have input into decisions such as these.

HELP also believes parents, civic planners and homeowners have a stake. School location and operation have implications for the entire community and must be viewed in the larger context. Urban decay might be expected to intensify with the removal of elementary schools to the periphery of the city or beyond.

HELP reiterates its position -- change can be good. We are not standpatters. But change is not necessarily progress. All aspects must be considered, and all individuals or groups affected by the change must share in the decision, if real progress is to be harmoniously achieved.

AND FINALLY:

HELP Board members met with Superintendent Cotton on April 17 for a two and a half hour discussion concerning the current School Board proposals for elementary schools, staggered school time, and the change of 6th grade to a middle school level.

Superintendent Cottom explained in great detail the modifications adopted by the Board of the 1969 Physical Facilities Assessment Survey: Phase I including a new Southwest elementary school, replacement of Sugar Grove School, and additions to Fuqua, Fayette, and Meadows; Phase II, which is not as yet financed, would be construction of a new North and new South elementary school with the eventual closing of eleven city elementary schools. Each of the above mentioned seven schools would apparently serve approximately 720 children, not including kindergarten. He further stated that the city school enrollment, grades 1-5, has decreased in the past three years from 5,331 to 4,729--a loss of 601 pupils. The largest percentage of loss is at the 5th grade level. The HELP Board feels his figures are incomplete because of the exclusion of kindergarten.

Cottom believes because of decreasing enrollment, the addition of the 6th grade to Junior Highs will now put a press on the schools. HELP wants further information concerning this matter.

The Physical Facilities Assessment Survey recommended a program of \$44,558,270; the adopted budget of the School Board amounts to \$12,431,000. Cottom said much of the saving is because of new construction procedures. However, recommendations to replace or add to Davis-Park, Lange, Rankin, Consolidated, Otter Creek, Collett, Rea, Ben Franklin, Thornton, Cruft, and Fairbanks have not been adopted, thus cutting \$17,445,000 from the original 1969 recommendations.

With the apparent lowering of construction costs (for example, the new Southwest school near Prairieton will cost \$1,300,000 instead of the proposed \$2,900,000), HELP raised the question if it were not possible to keep schools by renovation construction of smaller schools. HELP also asked for information concerning the classroom space in existing schools which could make the closing of some of the better schools unnecessary.

The main discussion centered around the lack of communication between the School Board, Administration, and the Vigo County citizens. Cottom said he did want input of ideas and explained the reason he attacked HELP during a recent School Board meeting was to get HELP to come and talk! HELP questioned the ignoring of the "input" from 2,000 students and a poll showing majority of teacher opposition to the new staggered time.

Superintendent Cottom said he would welcome regular meetings with HELP, which would be most informative; but if Vigo County citizens are to be made aware of such information other channels of communication must also be set up. The HELP Board asked if there were some way Vigo County citizens could be informed of changing school policies and construction proposals early enough to be a part of the planning.

HELP Committee of Education

H.E.L.P. BUILD A BETTER COMMUNITY

H. E. L. P.
300½ S. 5th ST.
TERRE HAUTE, IND. 47807



ARMED FORCES DAY 8c
THIRD SATURDAY
IN MAY

Public Library
222 North 7th St.
Terre Haute, Ind. 47807

H.E.L.P. REPORTS

REFERENCE
SPECIAL ISSUE ON EDUCATION DO NOT CIRCULATE

This special edition of the HELP Newsletter is prompted by recent highly controversial proposals by the Vigo County School Board and by Supt. Kenneth Cotton's recent accusations leveled at HELP.

Supt. Cotton has asked if "HELP is being used by certain individuals with axes to grind" and has claimed that HELP always opposes School Board positions and never proposes constructive programs.

Following is a copy of Supt. Cotton's statement directed to HELP at the April 9 School Board Meeting in reaction to HELP'S questioning the wisdom of the staggering of school hours:

The administration staff regrets that HELP did not see fit to approach the staff directly concerning the questions raised in its letter presented at the board meeting on March 26, 1973. The superintendent and/or members of the administrative staff would be pleased to meet with HELP committees or to attend general HELP meetings. This practice was observed in the past and no member of the staff ever refused a HELP invitation. At such meetings two way communication in an atmosphere of mutual respect is possible.

Some school officials wonder if the name of HELP is being used by certain individuals with axes to grind or by individuals with vested interests. The official minutes of the Vigo County School Corporation for the last three years reveal that HELP has made many statements, all in opposition, to programs that were being considered by the Board. It would seem reasonable that HELP, if it is truly dedicated to local progress, could have found at least one school program to support during the three year period that would have contributed to the progress of schools.

The administrative staff makes recommendations to the Board of School Trustees only after long and intensive research and study. No recommendation has been made by capricious fiat. Perhaps HELP has research findings or resources that are not available to the administrative staff of the Vigo County School Corporation.

It is indeed old-fashioned to continue believing, or to have ever believed, that the most productive learning takes place early in the day. All educational research available to trained educators shows that learning in either morning or afternoon is equally productive. In schools with dual sessions, no measurable difference in learning between morning and afternoon sessions has been obtained.

This administration has never used indirect methods of presentation of change as HELP inferred by innuendo in their March 26, statement. To the contrary, this administration has been frank in their presentation of all proposals.

In public board meeting October 9, 1972, the Superintendent presented a proposed building program and requested that it be referred to old business. On October 23, 1972, in a lengthy prepared statement the program was outlined and adopted by a 4 to 1 vote; only 5 members were present. This administration stated "The program will culminate in a K-5; 6-8; 9-12 organization". On November 27, 1972, Mrs. Tarbox, HELP president, raised questions concerning the location of new schools. Those questions were answered in detail on December 11, 1972. All of these answers were stated in televised and reported board meetings. This administration has never resorted to subterfuge to effect change. The business of educating boys and girls is too vital to be compromised.

The administration seeks and welcomes informed and concerned sources of public opinion. All constructive suggestions are considered.

At no time has the administration attempted to confuse the public or to keep it ignorant about its plans. False charges such as those presented by HELP do not develop the sound educational plans or confidence essential to progress.

It is requested in the spirit of fair play and better communication that HELP print this reply to their statement in the next HELP Newsletter. In this manner the public will be better informed.

HELP is neither sensitive nor paranoid, and it took Supt. Cotton's attack at the April 9 school board meeting in stride. Down through our history we have asked hard, probing questions of public officials in many areas -- and we can understand that this has at times made people uncomfortable. But since our mission from inception has been to protect the people of this community through investigation and report when such seemed indicated, we felt more commended than put down when it became obvious to one and all that we are a sufficiently viable force in this part of Indiana to evoke heated response. There have been times when we have wondered how much difference a group of housewives could make when it stated opinions on matters of significance in the city of Terre Haute and Vigo County. The support which so quickly came from unexpected sources when we were publicly -- and so unprofessionally and personally -- attacked made us once more aware that we are serving a valuable function and are recognized as so doing by many people.

Because we are aware of the possibilities of editorializing and of selective inclusion, now that we might be expected to feel a need to defend ourselves, we thought the fairest thing to do would be to collect and publish in one issue all comments made in our newsletter since July, 1970, when Supt. Cotton went into office. Statements made at school board meetings and in the local newspaper are less comprehensive than our newsletter reports. The approach, however, is consistent. HELP has utilized all available avenues, from WAAC editorials to personal interviews, to make itself heard in the area of education. For the present purpose we focus on our newsletter accounts.

Cotton has said that we could have found at least one thing to commend. As you read the remarks below, you will see that we have given such credit as seemed due at various points to the Vigo County School Corporation and its administrators. It is unfortunately true that we have at times felt that questions had to be asked and criticism levied. This we have tried to do as objectively and rationally as possible. We suggest that you read the following pages, which list with dates all remarks made in the newsletter concerning schools and the school board. Some matters have been resolved -- others remain very much with us and in the public eye. Decide for yourself whether HELP has had a personal axe to grind, or whether it has performed a public service in line with its traditional role.

October, 1970

HELP shares the concern of parents for the free lunch program for school children. We offer the following for your information . . . (Report of Congress passing the National School Lunch Act--P.L. 91-248.)

. . . To focus attention on the need for school lunches for needy children the National Council of Churches Crusade Against Hunger is conducting a National School Lunch Campaign. The campaign hopes to draw attention to the relationship between hunger and education. The Crusade has asked support from religious,

business, professional, and poor people's organizations and has issued the following suggestions:

- (a) Citizens should begin forming school lunch committees now.
- (b) The committee should become informed on the new law now.
- (c) The committee should visit its school board now to find out what plans are being made to implement the new law.
- (d) School boards should be requested to use the poverty level guidelines now.
- (e) School boards should be requested to publicize their guidelines.

QUESTIONS IN ORBIT

Why did the School Board choose (but not unanimously) to overlook choices of names for the two new high schools submitted by the committees appointed to select names?

November, 1970

QUESTIONS AT PUBLIC MEETINGS DRAW DIFFERENT KINDS OF RESPONSES

--From the SCHOOL BOARD

On October 26 HELP asked the School Board four questions about how the National School Lunch Act as Amended would be implemented. At the November 9 School Board meeting, Mrs. Beulah P. Dorney, Cafeteria Director, answered these questions fully and satisfactorily. Mimeographed copies of the questions and answers were distributed to school trustees and the audience.

January, 1971

[In an anticipation of its 10th anniversary, HELP planned a "happening" and listed coming attractions for the next month.]

EVERYBODY'S COMING!

In response to letters from Mayor Larrison to city officials, and letters from HELP to county officials, the HELP Anniversary Committee has received responses from the following:

VIGO COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION. John Miesel, Charles Clark, and Mrs. Georgia R. Cole will be in attendance to discuss the exhibit showing the diversity of overall instructional programs. Possibly a Mobile Psychological Testing Van will be on exhibit with trained personnel to describe services offered.

HELP COMMENTS:

CRUFT SCHOOL for its program to help children with visual perception problems.

March, 1971

QUESTIONS IN ORBIT

Is the VCSC "saving money" by dropping some forty classroom teachers or just rearranging expenditures?

April, 1971

TWO VIEWS TO STAFF REDUCTION

Public schools are everybody's business. They have major responsibility in this country for educating the public. Reports that the VCSC would not renew contracts of nearly forty teachers for next year were reports that concerned all residents of the county -- not just teachers, not just school administration.

With this in mind two HELP members asked for an interview with Supt. Cotton and heard his explanation of state wide fiscal problems supported by quotations from the Indiana School Boards Association's executive secretary, Lowell C. Rose, such as:

(April 12, 1971) It is time to establish priorities on which to base decisions as to what your school corporation can and cannot do. Options available for bringing appropriations within permissible limits will include: 1. Program reduction. 2. Staff reduction. 3. Limitations on planned increases in salaries and programs. 4. A combination of any or all of the first three. These decisions will not be easy.

(April 19, 1971) ... Given all of the present circumstances the only reaction which appears to make sense is for each school board, with its superintendent, to determine what it can and cannot do with the funds available... It will be difficult and uncomfortable for school board members and superintendents to make the kinds of decisions the present situation forces upon them... Schools are now facing at least a two-year period in which most corporations will not have the money to do what they would like to do.

From the teachers and other citizens HELP continues to hear differing views -- they fear increased class size despite efforts to prove the contrary and are not persuaded that the figures quoted accurately represent savings. The Teachers' Federation has opposed the reduction in staff. Pupils and parents express concern that class offerings will be reduced. And no one denies that the School Corporation will be losing some fine teachers.

The quality of life in any community depends greatly upon its public education -- especially the adequacy of education available to the young. It must include as broad an opportunity as possible for pupils from all walks of life. It must not be only for the elite or weighted to favor the academically talented.

If money saving is the goal, HELP is not yet persuaded that this might not be done by cutting costs other than those of instruction.

WE ARE JUST ASKING

With election of the school board for Vigo County due in May at the time of the primary, doesn't it seem odd that ALL votes should be split 4 to 3? In theory this is a non-partisan body, dedicated to getting the best possible schools for our money.

The law of averages would indicate that there should be unanimity of opinion now and then if the concern of the board was truly for good schools rather than politics or personal ego.

HELP COMMENTS:

The Katherine Hamilton Mental Health Center and the Vigo County School Corporation for working out a lease of the Thompson School facility. Instead of becoming a decaying eyesore, the grand old building will be used by the Beacon School of the Valley and the Vigo County Association for Retarded Children, and enable expansion of the work of the two associations.

March, 1972

The Indiana Primary elections are scheduled for the first Tuesday in May, and candidates for the national, state, and local elected officials will be indicated to the political parties by voter preference. HOWEVER School Board members for the VIGO COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD do not face a November run-off vote, but are chosen during the May primary.

Our schools should be of vital concern ... the largest tax wedge goes to their maintenance and operation, our children are directly affected and our community indirectly affected by what goes on.

HELP, therefore, urges you to inform yourself on the issues and the candidates, and to vote at the May primary. We are devoting the bulk of our bulletin to informing you -- you will have to take care of the voting. Please do.

SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES:

As of press date, the following have filed as candidates for the School Board:

From District I -- Iverson C. Bell
Susan Crittenden
James E. Rentschler
John J. Vale

From District III -- Joe R. Burton
Charlotte E. Caldwell
Noble R. Corey
James R. Daugherty
Max W. Lynch

District I encompasses the city of Terre Haute, Harrison Township.
District III includes Otter Creek and Nevins Townships.

Two of the 4 candidates from District I are to be elected, one from District III.

FOR IN-DEPTH INFORMATION:

SCHOOL CANDIDATES MEETING APRIL 12

HELP will sponsor a meeting at which School Board Candidates will have an opportunity to make their views heard by local taxpayers. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 12, 7:30 P.M. in one of the high school auditoriums. Which auditorium will be announced in the near future through the local news media.

HELP MEMBERS: Please mark your calendar and tell your friends, particularly parents of children in the Vigo County School System, to plan to attend this meeting and to hear how candidates for District I and District III propose to perform in a multi-million dollar business operation.

TOUR OF RIO GRANDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HELP members will join the League of Women Voters for a tour of the Rio Grande Elementary School on Tuesday, April 4.

HELP COMMENDS:

The School and Community Advisory Committee and calls your attention to the fine service it is performing in meeting the instructional needs of our Vigo County school children.

IN-SERVICE REORIENTATION PROGRAM FOR COUNSELORS

Forty counselors of VCSC are now undergoing an intensive in-service reorientation program, as recommended by the School and Community Advisory Committee. Meeting weekly at South Vigo High School, the focus is on how counseling services can be improved. The 6 to 9 sessions began February 29 under the direction of Dr. Andrew J. Horn, Dr. Merle Ohlsen and Dr. Lawrence Passmore. The three areas of in-service training include: Group Counseling, Behavior Modification; and Tests in Counseling-Vocational Counseling.

HELP has long been concerned with the lack of adequate counseling for our young people, as indicated by the questions raised by HELP at the March 12 School Board Meeting. Because the labor market appears to be changing and educational preparedness for tomorrow's jobs have great significance for today's students, HELP asked the following questions:

1. Is the need greater than ever for more emphasis on quality and sufficient quantity of counseling for all students in every curriculum?
2. Do children from disadvantaged homes enjoy the same quality of counseling as their peers who are college-bound, or does attention continue to be paid mainly to the college-bound achiever so that the needs of hundreds of other students in need of counseling are ignored or are passed over because of an inadequate counseling staff?
3. What is being done for and about problem students---those lacking motivation and interest, those with lower academic ability, psychological problems, trouble with the law, even the goof-off?
4. Is every student, regardless of his choice of curriculum, given counseling relating to what courses should be taken, and personal counseling to help him or her come to some realistic conclusions about what he or she intends to do when turned out with a high school diploma?
5. Are both boy and girl students encouraged to take academically challenging courses which are professionally oriented and intellectually demanding?

The above indicate the scope of HELP's interest in the counseling program in the Vigo County Schools, and we urge that the School Board give consideration to the many facets of a good counseling program.

AND, PERTAINING TO THE DRUG PROBLEM:

As more drug problems are surfacing in Vigo County, HELP checked with the authorities regarding to the handling of the problem at the schools and during school hours. We are all aware that the schools have no jurisdiction after school hours, nor off school property.

If a teacher suspects drug use, or observes symptoms resembling those of drug use, this is reported to one of the school deans and to the school nurse.

The nurse also makes an independent observation, and if the evidence indicates it, the student's parents are called.

The next step is a conference which includes the dean, the parents, and the school nurse. Every effort is made to bring in the parents--an attendance department official calls on the home if there is no phone, a registered letter may be sent, or if a welfare agency is involved they are contacted and a case worker is sent to visit the home.

If, after the conference, there still seems to be a problem of illegal drugs, the principle or dean calls in the juvenile authorities for a conference and the narcotics division of the police department is contacted in an effort to get to the source of the student's supply.

Although this is the end of direct school involvement, Assistant Chief of Police, Gerald Lowdermilk, gives us the subsequent sequence. The emphasis is getting at the source of supply--the pusher.

Both Mr. Lowdermilk and Chief of Detectives, Frank Hoffman, stress that the accused juvenile is protected as much as possible. Names are not released to the news media, and all investigative records are privileged information. A formal request must be made to the juvenile judge or circuit court judge, if anyone wishes to view the records.

Vigo County teachers have had some in-service training relating to symptoms and psychology of the drug user, while school nurses have had more detailed training in this area.

As for the student...every effort is made to encourage him to undergo treatment at one of the several local drug treatment centers.

April, 1972:

SEX EDUCATION FOR VIGO COUNTY:

HELP has a double-barreled concern with Sex education. The number one cause of drop-outs among girls is marriage and/or pregnancy. This fact, coupled with the near epidemic proportions of venereal disease in this country which now strikes 2.5 million Americans each year, makes it obvious that the need for information in this area is vital.

Accordingly, HELP has inquired about what "sex education" guidelines are recommended by the State of Indiana. Our reply, from Malcolm A. Mason, director of the division of health education of the State Board of Health for Indiana, states "to the best of our knowledge there are no state guidelines operating in the area of sex education... our philosophy has always encouraged local planning in all areas of health education. We encourage school systems, with the cooperation of the community, to develop its own policy and to establish a program that best meets the needs of the persons served by the program."

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VIGO COUNTY'S DROPOUT RATE LOWER

A report has been received by the Education Committee from Mrs. Sparkle G. Crowe, Director, Division of Pupil Personnel Services, State Department of Public Instruction, reporting Vigo County's school dropout rate for 1971-72. The rate is reported to be 20.6, a decrease from 21.1 in 1970-71. This is a favorable comparison to the national dropout rate of 25. The reasons most frequently given by students for dropping out, according to the State report, include disinterest in school, physical disabilities, disruptive home environment, marriage, pregnancy, and disciplinary problems. One of the reasons most frequently given was the need or desire of the student to earn money.

November, 1972

LIBRARY BOARD

In 1969 HELP raised the question of having the Library Board separated from the School Board. Mr. Ed Howard, Director of the Vigo County Public Library, recommended to the School Board that he prepare a study on the feasibility of a separate (appointed) library board. Mr. Howard reported at the May, 1969 meeting, noting "that elected board members are subject to recall and the voice of the electorate decides whether they succeed themselves in office. The appointed board, or members thereof, can be reappointed at the discretion of the appointing authority for up to four terms or 16 years." He recommended, at that time, that the school-library board arrangement be continued for the present if the board FELT IT WAS ABLE TO GIVE THE TIME REQUIRED FOR THE CONDUCT OF LIBRARY BUSINESS.

However, in October, 1972, Mr. Howard called for a separation of the school-library board. Since the time is approaching for building a new library--requiring the undivided attention of the board--is the present school-library board able to give the time required to the conduct of library business?

December, 1972

VIGO COUNTY SCHOOLS: SOME CONSIDERATIONS

HELP, along with many individual citizens, is greatly concerned both about the decisions which are being made in regard to schools in Vigo County, and by the way these decisions are reached. HELP has always believed that the people in the community should be informed---and, in turn, inform others---which is why members attend public meetings of various agencies (as they are entitled to do by law) and make themselves vocal when issues are raised which seem to have implications worthy of discussion and consideration.

To have parents who call school board members with legitimate questions personally abused and queried as to "which pressure group they belong to" is not informative nor helpful.

The school situation is at a critical stage. Once buildings are erected, or lots purchased for schools, it is too late for meaningful consideration of alternatives.

Savings to taxpayers is the usual defense for larger and larger schools, both at the elementary and secondary levels. Even if fiscal considerations were paramount (and HELP questions this automatic assumption of priorities), the rationale cannot hold up.

CONCERNING OUR CONCERN FOR SCHOOLS

HELP will be sponsoring a special open meeting with C. Kenneth Cotton as our guest on Thursday, May 18, at 7:30 p.m. Susan Ward will be our hostess in her home at 800 South 6th Street.

This is an open meeting and you are urged to attend.

June, 1972

MOTHERS MAY VOLUNTEER

Some confusion existing on the subject of volunteers to assist in supervising children during school lunch hours or at recess has been cleared up as a result of a meeting between HELP members and Superintendent of Schools, C. Kenneth Cotton.

Contrary to what one mother had reported to HELP, Mothers may contribute their services in supervisory capacities during lunchtime and recess. They may not instruct children, however, since that function is reserved to licensed teachers.

Although school is now dismissed for the summer, this information may be helpful to parents who are concerned with some reported lack of adequate supervision during these "free" periods, and perhaps they can help correct the situation when school resumes in the fall.

HELP COMMENTS:

The new "School Away From School" concept initiated as a part of the summer school program for high school students in Vigo County. Still on trial, and for a limited number of applicants, but we feel an important new approach.

ALSO

A technical listing of duties for school librarians, which is said to "more than reinforce HELP's stand for increasing school library services in Vigo County".

Quote: from Mr. Lynn Brown, Instructional Media Division, Department of Public Instruction - to HELP: "Anytime you have just passing out books, you don't have a program. It takes people with experience and knowledge and training and know-how to initiate and maintain a library program."

September, 1972

HAVE TRUCK, WILL COLLECT THEIR OWN

Did you know that the refuse collection bids received by the Vigo County School Corporation were: Cohen, \$61,800 and Gibson, \$71,600 -- each were two year contracts. After receiving the bids, the Corporation decided to buy its own truck with a compactor at a cost of \$28,865. The Corporation expects eighteen years of service from the truck and current reports show a probable savings of at least \$18,900 per year. HELP plans to inspect the new vehicle soon. Watch the next issue for a complete report.

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The Council of Educational Facility Planners in the September, 1969 guide (the authoritative source for school planners) says (p. 31):

"There are definite improvements in educational efficiency and economy of operation as the size (of schools) increases to approximately 300 pupils. From 300 to 500 pupils, advantages of economy of operation tend to be offset by educational disadvantages, and beyond approximately 500, the disadvantages of large size may become increasingly more apparent."

According to this source the problems now encountered in the North and South Vigo High Schools were to be expected, as structures so large are not recommended either for reasons of economy or service to students.

HELP believes in unification of town and county services, as evidenced by past work toward a joint health board and a joint park board. We believe the unified Terre Haute and Vigo County School District can work, and deplore statements issued by public school officials which might have the effect of encouraging rivalry.

HELP also wonders what the overall effect of eliminating so many small neighborhood schools will have. Having a long time interest in zoning and city planning, the organization would anticipate neighborhood decline as families follow schools to the suburbs or the country.

Will the voice of HELP---or individuals---be heard? Or will answers---if forthcoming at all---be evasive and inclined to discourage further inquiry? TO WHOM DO THE SCHOOLS ULTIMATELY BELONG?

(There have been no newsletters between this December issue and the copy now in your hands.)

Recent expressions of HELP's concern for better schools include the following statement made by President Susan Ward at the March 26, 1973, School Board meeting:

HELP wonders if the real reasons are being given by Supt. Cotton and the Vigo County School Corporation for suggesting radical changes in the community school practices. Staggering of school time, we are told, means that we don't need to buy as many buses to provide increased busing for our children. Staggering of school hours does mean more intensive bus utilization, but not real savings on transportation costs as buses presumably wear out according to number of miles driven rather than number of years driven. We may get by with fewer buses for the 1973-74 academic year, but we would have to replace them sooner. So what real savings is accomplished?

Is the actual reason instead to condition parents to the change in school hours which will be necessary several years hence when all -- or virtually all -- are bused if reorganization of elementary schools and loss of neighborhood schools eventuates? This is the kind of step-by-step, indirect presentation of change which has been used by the board and its administrators before.

Is another actual reason for the proposed school staggering so that each schoolroom at North and South Vigo High Schools could be used an additional hour each day, thus making room for freshmen there in September?

And is a reason that we want the freshmen there so that athletic coaches would have an additional year to provide training?

Will we find our sixth graders in the junior high schools in the fall, with automatic and undiscussed elimination (or cutback) of the Academically Talented Classes?

Will a program considered by many to be among the best within the system be phased out so subtly that request for continuation from parents and teachers comes too late?

Is the effect on elementary children of late arrival at school after their initial freshness and energy has been dissipated being considered? Is it old-fashioned to go on believing that the most productive learning takes place early in the day? That afternoon school sessions are less effective? Many teachers down through the ages have devised teaching schedules on that assumption, and think that early learning is demonstrably better.

What about working mothers? Are their young children to pay the price of turning into latch-key children because economic necessity in times of spiraling prices demands that both parents hold jobs?

Aren't low income families discriminated against in the event of larger combined elementary schools? One-car and no-car families cannot transport children to kindergarten; but these same children must go into grade one and compete with others who have had not only kindergarten but often one or two years of nursery school. These families also cannot attend school programs that the children are participating in if they are now within walking distance.

What happens to outside play after school when elementary school children are not dismissed until 3:50 p.m.? What happens to music lessons? Or participation at the Y activities? Or Scouts?

Is the vast inconvenience to families of having children leaving home at three different hours and arriving back home at three different hours not even worthy of consideration?

Will parents and teachers be consulted about these -- or other -- proposed changes? Or is the board interested in input from informed and concerned sources such as these?

HELP beseeches the school authorities to come forth with solid reasons for acts which seem to have tremendous implications for the children and home life of the community. HELP also beseeches teachers and parents to make their opinions heard by personally contacting individual school board members. What we seem to need is two-way communication, not a continuation and intensification of rule by seemingly capricious fiat.

Statement read by President Susan Ward at the April 9 School Board Meeting:

Of immediate concern are ramifications of the school staggering proposal now before the board.

HELP has already voiced objection in a WAAC editorial rebuttal on the following grounds: "The VCSC has given much lip service to unification of our Terre Haute and Vigo County student bodies. HELP applauds such statements and any action which would seem to make our present unified town-county system in actuality one, with better educational opportunity thereby accorded to all. To have a transportation system which results in lessening contact between these two elements, with the probability of renewed and intensified division, seems counterproductive. Supt. Cotton has also given verbal support to integration as complies with the law of the land. To have Harrison township -- the area with the heaviest black student

population -- arriving and leaving school at a different hour from certain predominantly white areas -- would have the effect of reinstating certain segregationist practices. HELP wonders if national agencies such as Health, Education, and Welfare would approve of the result of this action. Or local citizens and groups who are working toward the goal of equal and combined education for all of our children."

But there are additional objections. Traffic control is already a major problem in the vicinity of both North and South High Schools. The sheriff's department says no inquiry has come from the VCSC as to the effect of turning a second set of school buses loose at 4:00 p.m. There is already congestion especially in the 7th and Davis area and at 3rd and Davis.

Mr. Barton, in charge of traffic control for the city police, also reports no contact from the VCSC, and that he foresees certain difficulties.

Even a cursory examination of local industry would show many workers leaving jobs at 4:00 p.m. Columbia Records has between fifty and sixty, Anaconda has more than two hundred, and there are many other plants to consider. Often replacements would be arriving then for those who were leaving to further add to the congestion. Can we afford to intensify traffic problems which -- in certain areas -- are already acute? Isn't consultation with those responsible for highway safety and efficiency highly to be desired?

Ecology is a major concern now as we realize that limitations of our natural resources demand conservation and the wisest possible utilization. We as a nation are faced with crude oil and gas shortages which may even result in rationing. Is it wise to move toward more busing, which means, in effect, more consumption of these limited materials as well as more air pollution in a city where this is already a serious threat to the health and safety of us all?

Isn't the reaction of teachers to staggering worthy of consideration? The teachers' association queried its membership on the proposal, and received a 43 per cent response on the secondary level, with 78.2 per cent against the plan. The elementary teachers had a 65 per cent response, with 90.8 per cent opposed. Past action of the board has left in doubt the extent to which the board valued the opinion of teachers on matters pertaining to school policy and procedures. But HELP goes on record as believing that the teaching staff has valuable insight and must have input into decisions such as these.

HELP also believes parents, civic planners and homeowners have a stake. School location and operation have implications for the entire community and must be viewed in the larger context. Urban decay might be expected to intensify with the removal of elementary schools to the periphery of the city or beyond.

HELP reiterates its position -- change can be good. We are not standpatters. But change is not necessarily progress. All aspects must be considered, and all individuals or groups affected by the change must share in the decision, if real progress is to be harmoniously achieved.

AND FINALLY:

HELP Board members met with Superintendent Cotton on April 17 for a two and a half hour discussion concerning the current School Board proposals for elementary schools, staggered school time, and the change of 6th grade to a middle school level.

Superintendent Cottom explained in great detail the modifications adopted by the Board of the 1969 Physical Facilities Assessment Survey: Phase I including a new Southwest elementary school, replacement of Sugar Grove School, and additions to Fuqua, Fayette, and Meadows; Phase II, which is not as yet financed, would be construction of a new North and new South elementary school with the eventual closing of eleven city elementary schools. Each of the above mentioned seven schools would apparently serve approximately 720 children, not including kindergarten. He further stated that the city school enrollment, grades 1-6, has decreased in the past three years from 5,331 to 4,729--a loss of 601 pupils. The largest percentage of loss is at the 5th grade level. The HELP Board feels his figures are incomplete because of the exclusion of kindergarten.

Cottom believes because of decreasing enrollment, the addition of the 6th grade to Junior Highs will now put a press on the schools. HELP wants further information concerning this matter.

The Physical Facilities Assessment Survey recommended a program of \$44,558,270; the adopted budget of the School Board amounts to \$12,431,000. Cottom said much of the saving is because of new construction procedures. However, recommendations to replace or add to Davis-Park, Lange, Rankin, Consolidated, Otter Creek, Collett, Rea, Ben Franklin, Thornton, Cruft, and Fairbanks have not been adopted, thus cutting \$17,445,000 from the original 1969 recommendations.

With the apparent lowering of construction costs (for example, the new Southwest school near Prairieton will cost \$1,300,000 instead of the proposed \$2,900,000), HELP raised the question if it were not possible to keep schools by renovation construction of smaller schools. HELP also asked for information concerning the classroom space in existing schools which could make the closing of some of the better schools unnecessary.

The main discussion centered around the lack of communication between the School Board, Administration, and the Vigo County citizens. Cottom said he did want input of ideas and explained the reason he attacked HELP during a recent School Board meeting was to get HELP to come and talk! HELP questioned the ignoring of the "input" from 2,000 students and a poll showing majority of teacher opposition to the new staggered time.

Superintendent Cottom said he would welcome regular meetings with HELP, which would be most informative; but if Vigo County citizens are to be made aware of such information other channels of communication must also be set up. The HELP Board asked if there were some way Vigo County citizens could be informed of changing school policies and construction proposals early enough to be a part of the planning.

HELP Committee of Education

H.E.L.P. BUILD A BETTER COMMUNITY

H. E. L. P.
300½ S. 5th ST.

TERRE HAUTE, IND. 47801



Ms. Frances Boyd
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